

ARSON TASK FORCE



Since 1998 the Arson Task Force has operated as a multi-jurisdictional Unit, utilizing the talents and resources of experienced and dedicated fire, police and prosecutorial personnel to maximize results.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

In 2006, the Arson Task Force participated in the investigation of 118 structure fires in 18 municipalities within the County. Of these, 35 were determined to be the result of arson, 44 were accidental, and in 37 cases the cause remains undetermined. Fatal fires also continued to be a serious problem in Essex County in 2006. Thirteen people died as a result of fires.

Vacant houses are a problem plaguing the inner cities of Essex County, and have been the scenes of many fires over the past few years. In 2006, two people were killed in fires in vacant homes. The extent of this problem has prompted the Arson Task Force to work with municipalities and other law enforcement agencies to identify vacant structures being occupied by “squatters,” and take measures to help the occupants move to safer environments.

Essex County’s geographic location and network of highways make it an easily accessible and inviting locale for individuals looking for a place to burn a vehicle. In 2006, the Vehicle Fire Initiative opened 72 new investigations into such fires, resulting in the return of 11 indictments.

January of 2007 marked the successful culmination of one of the largest and longest criminal investigations in the history of Essex County when defendants Joseph LePore and Sean Ryan were sentenced to State Prison for their roles in starting the fire that killed three students and injured scores of others at Seton Hall University seven years earlier. Each of the defendants, who were freshman at the University when they set the fire in the early-morning hours in Boland Hall dormitory, was sentenced to five years in prison, with 18 months to be served without parole eligibility.



This case was the result of efforts by a team of investigators and prosecutors dedicated to uncovering the truth of what happened at Seton Hall, and bringing the perpetrators to justice. Led by the Essex County Prosecutor’s Arson Task Force, Senior Assistant Prosecutor Rachel Gran, Executive Assistant Prosecutor Hilary Brunell, and investigators from many agencies – local, county, state and federal – combined their efforts and worked together in

an unprecedented manner to compile the testimonial and forensic evidence to prosecute this case. As a result of this effort, the Essex County Prosecutor’s Arson Task Force was awarded the prestigious Arson Investigation Unit of the Year Award by the International Association of Arson Investigators at the annual conference in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada in May of 2007. This association also presented the Arson Investigator of the Year Award to Arson Task Force member Sheriff’s Detective John Frucci for his role in the Seton Hall investigation.

Much of the credit for the success of this case goes to the families of the deceased victims, whose patience and steadfast faith in the efforts of the Essex County Prosecutor’s Office sustained everyone working on the case. Without their support, and the cooperation of literally hundreds of members of the Seton Hall community, this task would have been impossibly difficult. Hopefully, the lessons learned from this case will help prevent other families from facing similar tragedies in the future.

In 2006 the ARSON TASK FORCE participated in the investigation of 118 structure fires in 18 municipalities within the County. Of these, 35 were determined to be the result of arson or explosive devices, 44 were accidental, and in 37 cases the cause remains undetermined.

CHILD ABUSE UNIT

The Child Abuse Unit was established by ECPO in 1983 in recognition of an urgent need to protect abused children and prosecute those that harm them. The Prosecutor's Office placed specialized law enforcement personnel with the desire, training and experience to service abused children. Unlike most child abuse units throughout the country, the ECPO Child Abuse Unit services all children up to the age of 18.

The Child Abuse Unit is an integral part of the Winona M. Lipman Child Advocacy Center located in Newark, New Jersey. The Child Advocacy Center has a

full-time prosecutor's office unit, child protective service caseworkers, juvenile trauma therapists, forensic pediatricians and multi-disciplinary coordinators.

The philosophy of the center is that the "Child Comes First." A multi-disciplinary approach is used to protect child victims from unnecessary



trauma during the investigative stages of a criminal case. Under this approach, a single interview of all victims of sexual abuse, under the age of 18 years old, is conducted by a highly skilled primary interviewer while professionals from other agencies view the interview. The technique prevents multiple interviews by law enforcement officials and reduces trauma suffered by the victim.

The Essex County Prosecutor's Office's Child Abuse Unit has the highest volume of child abuse cases in New Jersey. Although the Unit is not a fully vertical prosecution unit, assistant prosecutors assigned to the Unit handle a significant number of cases from the inception of the investigation to the case's ultimate disposition. The Unit is responsible for investigating or co-investigating cases involving children under the age of 18 who were victims of crimes which include:

- Sexual Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Child Endangerment (abuse, neglect, cruelty and abandonment)
- Child Pornography
- Interference with Custody/Kidnapping
- Luring

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

In 2006, the Child Abuse Unit investigated approximately 1,000 child abuse cases. During the year, the unit received approximately 400 criminal complaints and referrals from municipal police departments and other agencies. Over 300 cases were referred to grand jury or were resolved prior to indictment. Those cases that could not otherwise be resolved were referred to the trial courts.

From January to September 2007, the Unit investigated over 700 cases. During that period, over 225 cases were referred to grand jury or resolved pre-indictment.

In 2006 and 2007, the Unit was involved in a number of complex/multi-witness cases involving juvenile victims. The following are some significant cases from that period:

State v. Nelson Trias - A Maplewood Township school teacher was charged with having sexual intercourse with a 16 year-old student. A joint investigation was conducted by the Essex County Prosecutor's Office and the Maplewood Police Department. On September 15, 2006, the defendant pled to second-degree Official Misconduct and was sentenced to a term of three years in state prison.

State v. Alan Leventhal - A Montclair resident was charged with criminal sexual contact on a 14 year old female and possession of child pornography. On August 10, 2006, after forensic analysis of the defendant's computer was complete, the defendant pled guilty to first-degree child pornography and other related charges and was sentenced to a term of 10 years in state prison.

State v. Juan Isabel - A Bloomfield resident was charged and indicted for first-degree attempted murder. The defendant used a crow bar to hit his 13 year old son in the head. On December 22, 2006, a jury returned a verdict finding the defendant guilty of second-degree aggravated assault and related weapons offenses. Defendant was sentenced to 7 years in state prison, and must serve at least 85% of that term without parole.

State v. Joseph Iadipaoli - Defendant, a 37 year old Newark resident, was charged with sexually assaulting four brothers (ages 7, 9, 10 and 11). The defendant was indicted for four separate counts of first-degree sexual assault and six related charges. On January 26, 2007, a jury found defendant guilty on all 10 counts. On June 29, 2007, the defendant was sentenced to 27 years in state prison, and must serve at least 85% of that term without parole.

State v. Juan Monteiro – From the age of 12 to the age of 15, a female victim was sexually assaulted by the defendant. The defendant was indicted for 11 counts of first-degree aggravated sexual assault and related charges. The defendant pled guilty to all charges in the indictment. On June 12, 2007, the defendant was sentenced to 26 years in state prison, and must serve at least 85% of that term without parole.

In 2006, the CHILD ABUSE UNIT investigated approximately 1,000 child abuse cases. During the year, the unit received approximately 400 criminal complaints and referrals from municipal police departments and other agencies.

CRIME SCENE UNIT



On October 23, 2006, the Essex County Prosecutor's Office unveiled their new state of the art 2.5 million dollar Crime Scene Unit facility. The facility consists of a 15,000 square foot building which was designed to enhance the collection, processing and packaging of forensic evidence in Essex County. This facility was completed within an 11 month time period. The new facility includes a vehicle processing room equipped with a hydraulic lift which allows the Crime Scene Detectives to examine vehicles from all angles; a forensic processing room designed to better enable a detective to locate and identify fingerprints on various types of evidence; a drying chamber room designed for the processing and packaging of blood soaked clothing; a digital photography room as well as a new large evidence storage room capable of handling more than 50 times the amount of evidence which could be stored at the previous facility. The Crime Scene Unit now enables the detective staff to access the internet via a high speed computer system thus allowing for instant communications with all law enforcement agencies. The computer system also features a 3-D animated Crime Scene Sketch and Reconstruction software to allow the Crime Scene Detectives the ability to visually reconstruct a crime scene.

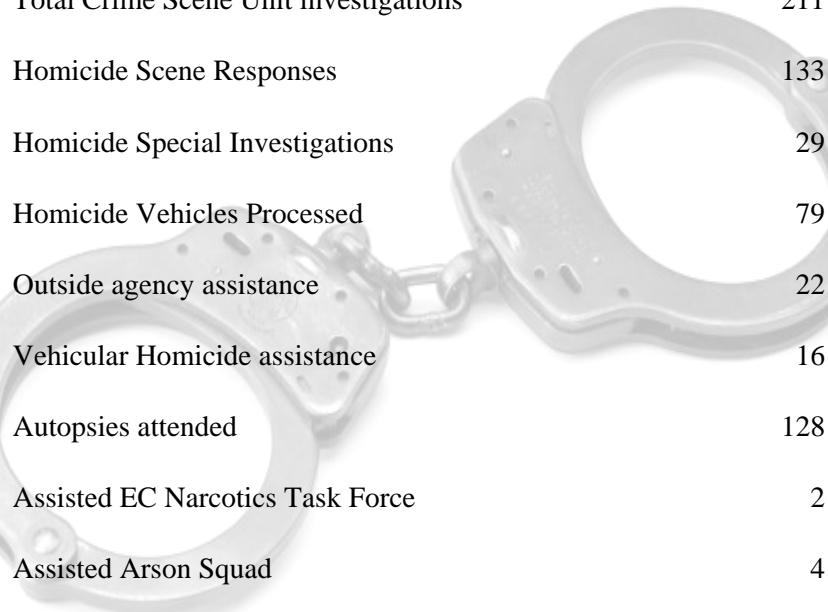
Also new to the Unit are three fully stocked field vehicles for processing of evidence at any crime scene. These vehicles are equipped with portable lighting

systems, alternate light sources which enable the detective to view bodily fluids, hairs, fibers and latent fingerprints invisible to the human eye under natural light.

The facility now includes the Vehicular Homicide Unit which is often called upon to assist in the processing of many crime scenes which involve motor vehicles, police pursuits as well as various other crimes.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

Since 2006, The Crime Scene Unit has conducted 211 investigations, which include 133 homicide scene responses, 29 homicide special investigations, assistance to 22 outside agencies, 16 assists for vehicular homicides and others.



Total Crime Scene Unit investigations	211
Homicide Scene Responses	133
Homicide Special Investigations	29
Homicide Vehicles Processed	79
Outside agency assistance	22
Vehicular Homicide assistance	16
Autopsies attended	128
Assisted EC Narcotics Task Force	2
Assisted Arson Squad	4
Aerial photography requests	4

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT

Domestic abuse is a social phenomenon that perpetuates itself, and thus continues to escalate if not addressed. Criminal sanctions are a key component of society's response to this crisis and the Domestic Violence Unit, which was established in 1992, addresses this need in Essex County. The primary function of the Unit is to screen and prosecute domestic violence cases.



The Unit arranges protection for victims and helps them regain their sense of personal safety and security. When appropriate, the Unit will seek to incarcerate violent and persistent offenders. In other cases, it will provide batterers with opportunities to rehabilitate themselves. The Domestic Violence Unit, in collaboration with the Victim-Witness Advocacy Unit, offers victims assistance and appropriate referrals to shelters and counseling programs. Such interventions are necessary because domestic violence victims are often unwilling to testify against their abusers because of safety fears, and family and/or romantic relationships with the offenders.

The Unit also makes re-arming determinations for law enforcement officers who are involved in domestic violence incidents; petitions for the forfeiture of weapons and firearm permits seized as a result of domestic violence incidents. When an abuser violates a civil restraining order issued to protect the victim, a criminal contempt charge is filed. The Unit's assistant prosecutors handle contempt cases in the Family Part court.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

During, 2006, the members of the Domestic Violence Unit processed 1,977 cases assigned to the Unit. Assistant Prosecutors presented 311 cases to the Grand Jury during this period. In addition, 43 forfeiture petitions were considered.

In 2006, the Domestic Violence Unit played a significant role in co-chairing Essex County's Domestic Violence Working Group. The group is comprised of members of law enforcement, the judiciary, victim service providers, probation officers and Domestic Violence Crisis Response Team members. The Domestic Violence Working Group addresses systemic problems in the criminal justice field, and endeavors to coordinate the efforts of the various member organizations. It is instrumental in implementing the dictates of New Jersey's Domestic Violence Procedures Manual.

The Essex County Prosecutor's Office has established an innovative Municipal Court Victims' Advocate Program. The program was instituted to address the needs of domestic violence victims at the Municipal level, where a majority of domestic violence cases are handled. Victims' Advocates appear in the Municipal Courts throughout Essex County in order to provide information, support and guidance to domestic violence victims along with referrals for counseling and battered women's shelters.

Members of the Domestic Violence Unit continue to appear at automatic bail reviews of defendants charged with crimes of domestic violence. These reviews are scheduled before a Superior Court Judge most mornings. As part of this initiative, the Domestic Violence Unit has assumed responsibility for victim notification relative to this automatic bail process. Victim contact, at this early stage of the prosecution, enables the assistant prosecutor to assess the merits of the case.

During, 2006, the members of the DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT processed 1977 cases assigned to the Unit. Assistant Prosecutors presented 311 cases to the Grand Jury during this period. In addition, 43 forfeiture petitions were considered.

EXTRADITION UNIT

The Extradition Unit is responsible for executing interstate requests for out-of-state prisoners who are facing charges in Essex County and for responding to similar requests from other jurisdictions. After extradition, the receiving State adjudicates its charges and the prisoner is generally returned to the sending jurisdiction to complete any outstanding sentences. Following completion of the out-of-state sentence, the prisoner will then return to serve the additional time in the receiving State. The Unit coordinates its extradition activity with various statewide and federal task forces that address specific criminal concerns, e.g. narcotics trafficking and organized crime.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

The Extradition Unit played a key role in gaining the return of two suspects from out-of-state locations following the August, 2007, murder of three college students in the Ivy Hill section of Newark.

The Star-Ledger

Suspect in Newark schoolyard slayings extradited

by William Kleinknecht
Friday November 02, 2007, 6:05 PM

A 24-year-old man held in Maryland in the August slayings of three teenagers in a Newark schoolyard has been ordered extradited to New Jersey, authorities said.

Rodolfo Godinez of Newark appeared before a judge this afternoon in Prince George's County Circuit Court in Upper Marlboro, Md., and lost his last bid at fighting the extradition.

New Jersey authorities from the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, Newark police and Essex County Sheriff's Department were en route to Maryland by car early this evening. They expected to have Godinez in the Essex County Jail by Sunday.



AP File Photo/Gail Burton

Triple murder suspect Rodolfo Godinez.

The EXTRADITION UNIT played a key role in gaining the return of two suspects from out-of-state locations following the August, 2007, murder of three college students in the Ivy Hill section of Newark.

GANG UNIT

The primary function of the Gang Unit is to develop and share gang-related intelligence with other law enforcement agencies; investigate gang-related criminal activity; and provide gang awareness programs for public and private institutions.

Essex County is faced with a rising gang problem. Criminal intelligence has indicated that there are substantial recruitment efforts underway in some local schools. Correctional facilities within New Jersey have experienced problems with gang recruitment and initiation. Traditionally, it was believed that criminal street gangs were only found in high crime neighborhoods usually within inner-cities; however, this appears not to be the case. Members of the ECPO Gang Unit have developed intelligence showing that criminal street gangs are also present in suburban locales.

In late 2005, Prosecutor Paula Dow and United States Attorney Christopher Christie formed the Essex-Federal Gang Suppression Task Force. The task force consists of Assistant United States Attorneys, ECPO Assistant Prosecutors and Detectives, Newark Police Detectives, Essex County Sheriff's Detectives, a Deputy United States Marshall and special agents from the FBI, DEA, ATF and ICE. This task force, which is located within the ECPO Gang Unit, has been charged with investigating and targeting dangerous sects of the various street gangs operating in Essex County.

2006 - 2007 Accomplishments:

In 2006, the members of the Essex Federal Gang Task Force commenced investigations into two different gang related criminal enterprises. One of these enterprises involved the sale of large quantities of controlled dangerous substances and high powered firearms. The other enterprise involved the distribution of large amounts of prescription pain medication on the streets of downtown Newark. Both of these investigations continued into 2007 and were successfully concluded with numerous arrests and the seizures of many firearms and more than \$100,000 worth of narcotics.

The ECPO Gang Unit also conducted 47 investigations in 2007 resulting in 29 arrests and 19 successful prosecutions. In February 2007, a reputed gang member with the Black Guerilla Family, an affiliate of the Bloods and Crips, was sentenced to 30 years in prison for the fatal shooting of an 18 year-old Irvington resident.

On May 18, 2007, an illegal prescription drug operation in Newark was thwarted by detectives from the Essex-Federal Gang Suppression Partnership. The scheme, known as Operation Medicine Boyz, generated over \$250,000 of illegal prescription drug sales over the

last year. Four individuals were arrested. The scheme involved “runners” making illegal purchases of prescription pain medication drugs such as Oxycontin, Xanax, Percoset and Tussionex. The defendants purchased the prescriptions from Medicare patients for cash or heroin. The runners would sell to “buyers”, in return for cash, who would then resell the pain pills to street drug buyers at a profit.

Operation First Blood – On June 14, 2007, 15 members and associates of the Bloods street gang were arrested and charged federally on drug-trafficking and weapons charges. Some of the defendants were trafficking semi-automatic assault rifles and high-powered handguns. Over the course of the investigation 14 firearms, 560 grams of crack cocaine and a smaller amount of heroin were seized.

In September 2007, gang member Naeem Mitchell was sentenced to 30 years in prison for his involvement in a shoot-out with four Newark police officers at a Newark housing complex in 2005. In October 2007, Bloods gang member, Khalil Tutt, was convicted by a jury of reckless manslaughter in the fatal shooting of Newark Police Officer Dwayne Reeves in 2005. In December 2007 he was sentenced to 30 years with 18 years before he may be eligible for parole.

Gang Awareness Seminar – On Nov.16, 2007, the Essex County Prosecutor’s Office Gang Task Force conducted a gang awareness seminar designed to help educate more than 250 law enforcement officers and school administrators about emerging gang trends and activities in Essex County.

In addition to taking down two major gang enterprises through investigations mounted by the federal-state task force component, the ECPO GANG UNIT conducted 47 investigations in 2007 resulting in 29 arrests and 19 successful prosecutions.

HOMELAND SECURITY / COUNTER-TERRORISM

Post-911, county and local law enforcement agencies have been tasked with many new responsibilities. In early 2002, the State of New Jersey created the Office of Counter-Terrorism (O.C.T.) within the Department of Law and Public Safety. In early 2006, New Jersey formed the state Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) to replace O.C.T. OHSP, a cabinet level agency, is a multi-faceted organization whose primary mission is to coordinate New Jersey's anti-terror measures. OHSP communicates with the State's law enforcement agencies primarily through the twenty-one county prosecutors' offices. Each county prosecutor has been required to designate a Counter-Terrorism Coordinator in their county. The Counter-Terrorism Coordinator is the primary link between all law enforcement agencies in the county and OHSP.

The Counter-Terrorism Coordinator is responsible for disseminating intelligence briefing information to Essex County's law enforcement agencies. The Counter-Terrorism Coordinator is also the point person for coordinating the State's response to all leads and tips regarding possible terrorist activity. Leads from municipal and county agencies are sent to the Coordinator, who in turn forwards them simultaneously to OHSP and the F.B.I. for further investigation. When a local law enforcement response is required, the Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate agency handles it.

The HOMELAND SECURITY AND COUNTER-TERRORISM UNIT coordinates increased security measures with the other law enforcement agencies in the county, including police agencies in Essex County, the Essex County Sheriff's Office, the New Jersey Transit Police Department and the Homeland Security Bureau of the Newark Police Department.

HOMICIDE UNIT



The Homicide Unit of the Essex County Prosecutor's Office is the oldest specialized unit in the office. The squad is designed to ensure close cooperation between the local police departments and the Prosecutor's Office whenever a homicide occurs within the County. The squad also investigates vehicular homicides and motor vehicle incidents resulting in serious bodily injury, in conjunction with local police agencies and the New Jersey State Police. The focus of the motor vehicle investigations is to determine if the incident resulting in death or serious bodily injury was the result of criminal conduct.

In addition to criminal homicides, the Homicide Squad is primarily responsible for investigating police-weapon discharges that occur within Essex County. If the shooting results in a fatality, an Assistant Prosecutor in the Homicide Squad presents the matter to the Grand Jury. Non-fatal discharges that result in injury or property damage are generally referred to the Essex County Prosecutor's Office Professional Standards Bureau. The squad also responds to all incidents when a police officer is shot and is responsible for conducting special and/or confidential investigations as may be assigned by the Prosecutor.

The Homicide Squad handles matters designated as Special Investigations. For example, there are times when a death occurs under circumstances which do not immediately indicate that a homicide was committed, but nonetheless an investigation is required to determine if someone was legally responsible for the death.



The Assistant Prosecutors assigned to the Homicide Squad spend considerable time and effort assisting in the investigative phase of many cases, to assure that usable and relevant evidence is collected in a manner that will survive all possible challenges in the courtroom. Once

an arrest warrant is issued, the Assistant Prosecutor works with an Investigator to prepare the case for a Grand Jury presentation. If a homicide involves a juvenile offender, the squad prosecutes the case in juvenile court or requests waiver of the offender to adult court when appropriate.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

During 2006, the Essex County Prosecutor's Office Homicide Squad investigated 155 homicides; of that number, 1 was a police-involved shooting. There were 88 fatal and serious motor vehicle collisions and 81 special investigation matters. Prosecutors assigned to the unit were also responsible in 2006 for handling three juvenile waiver proceedings. 155 Homicides represents a 2% increase in the homicide rate over 2005. During the same period, Homicide prosecutors and investigators prepared, received and executed over 94 search warrants and additional communications data warrants.

143 homicide cases were prepared for Grand Jury presentation in 2006 with a total of 115 cases indicted. The Vehicular Homicide Unit also presented 30 cases to the Grand Jury of which 15 were indicted.

During 2006, there were 97 adult dispositions, which equal an 18% decrease over 2005. There was an 88% office wide conviction rate of homicide cases disposed of by trial or plea. 57% of all homicide prosecutions in 2006 were handled by Homicide personnel, a decrease of

7% from 2005. Finally, the office had an increase in the dismissal of homicide cases by assistant prosecutors from 5 cases in 2005 to 9 cases in 2006.

Significant Cases:

State v. William Chisolm - In July of 2005, the defendant strangled his wife in his apartment and hid the body in the basement of his Newark home. The landlord found her decomposed body two weeks after she disappeared. The defendant had covered her body with a carpet and placed many room fresheners around it. Defendant was arrested based on circumstantial evidence. In January of 2006, a jury convicted him of murder. He was sentenced to 50 years.

State v. Joseph Wallace - On June 15, 2005, at approximately 7:15 p.m., the defendant approached and shot the victim James McMillan of Newark outside a laundromat on Central Avenue, Newark. The shooting was over a dispute of who had the authority to sell drugs in that area. Witnesses who had co-operated initially, later recanted in various ways. In October of 2006, the defendant was convicted of murder and was sentenced to life.

State v. Kaseem Upshaw et al. - During 2006, the Homicide Squad successfully prosecuted members of the Bloods street gang known as the Gangster Killer Bloods, "GKB", for their involvement in a double murder which occurred on December 14, 2004. Two men were shot and killed by members of the "GKB" and another victim was shot and survived. Later that same night, members of the "GKB" were involved in a shootout with members of the Newark Police Department. Various members were apprehended that night and others shortly thereafter. Many weapons were recovered also. All nine indicted gang members entered pleas of guilty to various crimes with a total of 70 years of incarceration subject to NERA.

State v. Rasol McCrimmon - On July 17, 2004, defendant shot and killed the victim outside of a South 13th Street barber shop in Newark. Defendant fled the scene but was apprehended after two weeks of investigation. The sole eyewitness to the crime was assaulted by gunfire approximately 10 months after the murder. He was hesitant to cooperate. The trial took place during the last week of October, 2006 with a jury finding defendant guilty of murder in November of 2006. Defendant was sentenced to 50 years.

State v. Justin Hague - On June 19, 2004, the victim was struck and killed by a car driven by defendant. The impact occurred at Lyons Avenue and Clinton Place in the City of Newark at about 1:15 a.m. The defendant fled the scene and traveled eight blocks with the police in pursuit until he ultimately stopped. He was tested at a .29% blood alcohol level. The Vehicular Unit of the office conducted the investigation. The case went to trial before a jury and in February of 2006, defendant was convicted of First-degree Aggravated Manslaughter. He was sentenced to 20 years, NERA.

State v. Sultana Hague - In March of 2003, defendant stabbed to death the children of her husband from a former marriage. The family resided at 20 Marshall Street in Irvington, NJ. On the date of the incident, the natural mother had dropped off the two children for a visit with their father. Apparently, the husband and the new wife had an argument just prior thereto.

The husband left the apartment for a time and the wife stabbed to death a four year-old girl and a six year-old boy. The defendant fled to Canada but was apprehended and returned to our jurisdiction. In April of 2006, defendant entered guilty pleas to two counts of murder and was sentenced to 40 years, NERA.

During 2006, the Essex County Prosecutor's Office HOMICIDE UNIT investigated 155 homicides; of that number, 1 was a police-involved shooting. There were 88 fatal and serious motor vehicle collisions and 81 special investigation matters. Prosecutors assigned to the unit were also responsible in 2006 for handling 3 juvenile waiver proceedings.

JUVENILE TRIAL UNIT



The Juvenile Trial Unit of the Essex County Prosecutor's Office vertically prosecutes juveniles for acts of delinquency that if committed by an adult would be indictable offenses. The goals of the Unit are to ensure public safety through swift and certain punishment of the violent repetitive offender, reduce juvenile recidivism, divert minor offenses from the juvenile justice system, and seek to rehabilitate juveniles. The Juvenile Trial Unit performs the functions of the Complaint and Intake, Central Judicial Processing, Consolidated, Investigative Squads and Trial Units of the Office for juvenile delinquency cases. The Unit also educates the public about the juvenile justice system.

The primary legal function of the Juvenile Trial Unit is to prosecute or dispose of all complaints charging acts of juvenile delinquency. The New Jersey Code of Juvenile Justice (N.J.S.A. 2A: 4A-23 et. seq.) defines delinquency to include the commission of an act by an individual under age which if committed by an adult would constitute a crime, a disorderly persons offense, a petty disorderly offense or the violation of any other penal statute, ordinance or regulation excluding motor vehicle charges, curfew violations and smoking in public.

In 2006, the Juvenile Trial Unit received delinquency complaints for 4,991 juveniles and prosecuted 4,076 new cases. Assistant Prosecutors collected \$21,144.75 from forfeited drug transaction proceeds. In 2006, the Juvenile support staff entered

5,268 informal, formal and violation of probation cases into the JURIS system. This number represents new complaints only and not charges.

There was a slight increase in the number of juveniles who committed offenses in 2006 from 2005. In 2005, 4,926 juveniles committed new offenses as compared to 4,991 juveniles in 2006. Juveniles committing narcotics, robbery and weapons offenses increased by 19 per cent from 1,662 to 1,992 in 2006. Juveniles committing carjacking and narcotics offenses decreased substantially in 2006. Juveniles committing homicides for this time period also increased from 9 in 2005 to 10 in 2006.

Juvenile chronic offenders continued to plague the juvenile justice system in Essex County in 2006. 966 juveniles were reviewed for participation in the Juvenile Chronic Offender Program. 570 juveniles were accepted for prosecution as chronic offenders. 66 of the juveniles committed to Jamesburg were enrollees in the Juvenile Chronic Offender Program. 48 of the 84 juveniles placed in Juvenile Justice Commission residential placements were chronic offenders. 110 of the 141 parolees from Jamesburg were members of the chronic offender program in 2006. 34 chronic offenders had waiver petitions filed in 2006. 8 chronic offenders were waived in 2006. 132 juveniles aged out of the chronic offender program in 2006 and 2 died.

There were 79 commitments for incarceration to the Juvenile Justice Commission in 2006. 72 male juveniles and 1 female juvenile were committed to the Jamesburg Training School in 2006. 6 juveniles were committed twice in 2006. 12 of the juveniles committed had prior commitments to Jamesburg. 10 were sentenced to Jamesburg in 2005 and 3 in 2004. One juvenile was committed in 2004, 2005 and 2006. 84 juveniles were accepted into residential programs administered by the Juvenile Justice Commission in 2006. 78 were males and 6 were females. Of the 84 residential placements, 8 were dismissed or removed from residential placements, and 1 escapee was killed while on escape status. Of those 84 residential placements, 6 were subsequently committed to Jamesburg.

The Juvenile Trial Unit handled several cases of significance in 2006. These included:

State in the Interest of BB - BB, a twelve year old male was charged with setting a fire in his home, which resulted in the death of his older brother. The juvenile plead guilty to felony murder and received a suspended sentence to the Jamesburg Training School for Boys. He was placed on five years probation.

State in the Interest of OA, GR, OA and SR - Five juveniles went on a carjacking and robbery spree during August 2005. They subsequently committed four more over a 48 hour period three weeks later. Each juvenile had an extensive record. Judge Troiano waived each of them on multiple carjacking charges on January 11, 2006.

State in the Interest of JW - The juvenile, the driver of the felony vehicle, led Irvington police officers on a high speed chase through city streets before entering into Newark and striking a number of private vehicles. One of the occupants of the felony vehicle was pronounced dead as a result of injuries sustained in the accident. On November 17, 2006, the juvenile entered a plea of guilty to First-degree Aggravated Manslaughter. The juvenile was sentenced on January 11, 2007 to a four year term at Jamesburg.

In 2006, the JUVENILE TRIAL UNIT received delinquency complaints for 4,991 juveniles and prosecuted 4,076 new cases. Assistant Prosecutors collected \$21,144.75 from forfeited drug transaction proceeds.

MEGAN'S LAW UNIT



The Megan's Law Unit was established in 1995 in response to a state law designed to protect potential victims from convicted sex offenders who may pose a risk to the community. The law requires convicted sex offenders to register with local law enforcement, enabling them and the Essex County Prosecutor's Office to locate and identify offenders, and to alert the public when necessary.

The assistant prosecutors evaluate the level of threat a convicted sex offender poses to the community. These evaluations are made in accordance with guidelines established by the Attorney General's Office. A three tier classification system is used, which is designed to assess the level of risk for re-offense a particular sex offender poses to his/her community. The evaluation process is triggered when a sex offender is released into the community from a custodial sentence, or when they are placed on probation.

Each tier classification provides information about a sex offender to law enforcement agencies and, when appropriate, to the public. Tier 1 offenders are deemed a low risk for re-offense and notification is limited to the police departments and County Prosecutor Offices where the offender lives, works and/or attends school. Tier 2 offenders are considered a moderate risk for re-offense and

notification is sent to all age appropriate schools, day care centers, women's shelters and registered community organizations within the geographic area where an offender is "likely to encounter" potential victims. Tier 3 offenders are considered a high risk for re-offense and all residences, businesses, schools, day care centers, women's shelters and registered community groups within an offender's "likely to encounter" zone receive notification. Notification flyers are in English but are also provided in foreign languages if a particular notification area has a large number of individuals who do not use English as their primary language. Due to Essex County's population density, Tier 3 community notifications generally take two to three weeks to plan and execute after the Tier 3 court order is obtained. Tier 3 notifications are labor intensive operations and the Megan's Law Unit conducts them in cooperation with local police departments with the highest standards of excellence and professionalism.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

The Megan's Law Unit is the busiest Megan's Law Unit in the State of New Jersey because it has the most registered sex offenders. In 2006, there were 1,435 registered sex offenders living in Essex County, an increase of 113 since 2005. 1,415 of those are considered active cases. An active case means a sex offender has registered in Essex County and the New Jersey State Police have received a copy of his or her fingerprint card. The remaining 20 cases are awaiting documented evidence indicating the registered offender has transferred to another county in New Jersey, registered in another state, deceased or is pending deportation.

Due to the transient nature of a significant portion of the sex offender population in Essex County, very few Megan's Law files are ever closed. A Megan's Law file can only be closed if a registered sex offender dies, relocates permanently out of state or is deported. Additionally, every time a sex offender moves to a new address within Essex County or moves into Essex County from elsewhere, he or she is entitled by law to a new court hearing. During 2006, approximately 150 such offenders were entitled to a new hearing, requiring community re-notification. Thus, the overall number of cases handled by the Unit increases annually even when the sex offender has been assigned a court ordered final tier designation.

For the 2006 calendar year, the Megan's Law Unit pre-tiered 105 cases, designated 63 registrants as Tier 1 sex offenders, obtained court orders for 39 Tier 2-Internet cases and 8 Tier 2 Non-Internet cases. The Unit also obtained 11 court orders for Tier 3 sex offenders, all of whom were posted on the Internet.



Three Tier 3 notifications were conducted wherein notices were distributed to 4,259 individual residences and businesses with the help of local law enforcement, and 3,387 flyers were delivered to schools by the Megan's Law Unit's Community Notification Specialist. She also personally delivered 424 Tier 2 flyers to various schools, day care centers and community organizations.

Essex County's Internet postings increased by 41 in 2006 (including aliases). Essex County's Internet numbers are the highest in the state. This is a significant achievement considering the tremendous volume of active cases handled by the Unit annually.

The Megan's Law Unit also presented 99 cases to the Grand Jury in 2006. This number shows a continued climb in the number of violations for Megan's Law and Parole Supervision for Life being prosecuted in Essex County.

For the 2006 calendar year, the MEGAN'S LAW UNIT pre-tiered 105 cases, designated 63 registrants as Tier 1 sex offenders, obtained court orders for 39 Tier 2-Internet cases and 8 Tier 2 Non-Internet cases. The Unit also obtained 11 court orders for Tier 3 sex offenders, all of whom were posted on the Internet.

NARCOTICS TASK FORCE UNIT

The mission of the Essex County Narcotics Task Force (ECNTF) is to investigate and prosecute mid to upper level narcotics distributors operating in Essex County. In addition to initiating investigations and prosecuting those cases, the ECNTF also assists federal, state, county and municipal law enforcement agencies with their investigations.

The ECNTF is staffed by an Assistant Prosecutor/Director, a captain, lieutenant, two additional assistant prosecutors, county detectives, task force officers from outside agencies and clerical personnel. The assistant prosecutors in the ECNTF provide direction and legal support for the Unit's investigations. They handle the prosecution of all ECNTF generated cases from initial investigation through the Grand Jury process. The legal staff also assists in the drafting of search warrant affidavits, electronic surveillance affidavits and complaints. The assistant prosecutors are available 24 hours a day to provide legal review of search warrant affidavits for all law enforcement agencies in Essex County.

The investigative staff of the ECNTF consists of County Detectives and police officers from other agencies whose primary function is to initiate investigations of narcotics traffickers throughout Essex County. The detectives are involved in identifying targets, gathering evidence, cultivating and managing informants and the preparation and execution of search and arrest warrants. The detective staff works in both undercover and surface capacities. Members of the detective staff are often called upon to assist other law enforcement agencies in ongoing narcotics investigations.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

In 2006, the ECNTF initiated 117 investigations which culminated in 209 arrests. ECNTF investigations resulted in the seizure of over 3.8 pounds (1.725 kilograms) of cocaine, more than fourteen pounds (6.5 kilograms) of heroin and 320 pounds (145 kilograms) of marijuana. ECNTF investigations also resulted in the seizure of 200 ecstasy pills, more than 300 steroid doses and five ounces of crystal methamphetamine. The approximate street value of the narcotics seized by the ECNTF in 2006 is \$50,000 for the cocaine, \$325,000 for the heroin and \$225,000 for the marijuana. ECNTF personnel also seized over \$166,598 in currency from drug dealers in 2006. ECNTF personnel seized 39 firearms in 2006. This number is significant given the fact that ECNTF operates with a relatively small number of personnel. Additionally, given the increase in violent crime in Essex County, removal of illegal firearms from the streets is a very important step forward in the effort by law enforcement to reduce violent crime. The ECNTF obtained and executed more than 90 search warrants in 2006

The ECNTF participated in a joint operation with the New Jersey State Police focusing on flagrant narcotics dealing at the Joseph Bradley Public Housing Complex located in Newark's Central Ward. The investigation, dubbed "Operation Chainsaw", resulted in 36 arrests and the seizure of large amounts of cocaine and heroin. The ECNTF also seized three firearms and more than \$25,000 in cash during the investigation.



In 2006, the ECNTF completed an investigation begun in the latter half of 2005 focusing on mid-level drug distribution in East Orange, NJ. As this case progressed, the ECNTF received court approval to intercept communications from the target's cell phone. This led ECNTF investigators to two higher level distributors and more court authorized wiretaps. The investigation concluded with numerous arrests, the seizure of more than five ounces of cocaine and three handguns. After the original target was arrested in this case, the primary case agent for the ECNTF was able to develop information linking this defendant to an open homicide in Essex County. In addition to first-degree narcotics charges, this subject was subsequently charged with criminal homicide by the ECPO Homicide Squad.

In June 2007, federal charges were filed against fifteen members and associates of the Bloods street gang for trafficking drugs and weapons.

The charges and arrests were the result of a one year long investigation using three cooperating witnesses to make more than 20 purchases of crack cocaine, heroin and firearms from members and associates of the Nine Tre Bloods set in Newark.

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OFFICIAL CORRUPTION & ECONOMIC CRIME UNIT

The O.C.E.C. Section is responsible for the investigation and supervision of all major fraud and “white collar” crime prosecutions other than those completed by municipal authorities. The term “fraud case” applies to all cases involving financial defalcation, manipulation and other schemes of a criminal nature. The O.C.E.C.



Section investigates and prosecutes crimes involving theft, bribery, embezzlement and all aspects of corruption and criminal misconduct in government (except police corruption which is investigated by the Professional Standards Bureau). Additionally, the Section handles identity theft, mortgage

frauds, election frauds, insurance frauds, frauds in the court system, jury tampering, witness tampering, extortion, threats to members of the Superior Court judiciary and violations of the Open Public Meeting Act. While the majority of the investigations conducted by the Section are self-originated, some investigations are prompted by the receipt of formal signed complaints from municipal authorities.

The Section’s creation in the early seventies was due to the obvious need to investigate corruption and “white collar” crime cases on the county rather than municipal level. Municipal police departments are often not able to thoroughly investigate complicated economic crime and public corruption cases. Indeed, in many cases, governmental, bank, and financial records can only be obtained by grand jury subpoena, court order or search warrant, and therefore are beyond the reach of a municipal police department. Many “white collar” crimes are multi-jurisdictional in nature. Beyond this, such cases are far more complex than the “average” case. They usually require review of voluminous records by an experienced investigator. Moreover, from a public perception standpoint, it is more

appropriate for this Office, rather than local police, to investigate allegations of corruption by municipal officials.

Because of the complexity of the allegations and investigations, close interaction between the Assistant Prosecutor and Investigator is necessary throughout the investigation; especially since these investigations often involve assembling and reviewing complex financial and business records, preparing and obtaining court orders for in- and out-of-state records and witnesses (such as bank records, handwriting, toll records), and frequently present witness problems involving the 5th Amendment or attorney/client privilege.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

State v. Frank Bravata - This investigation involved allegations of Theft by Unlawful Taking or Disposition and Forgery committed by Frank Bravata against his former employer. Although the victim had several security procedures in place in an effort to prevent employee thefts, Bravata was able to circumvent the security procedures and steal from the company, by forging the victim's signature and negotiated numerous checks drawn on his PNC business account. The total monetary loss as of October 11, 2004 was \$219,487.54. Bravata entered a plea to second-degree Theft by Unlawful Taking and 3rd Degree Forgery.

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PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BUREAU



The Professional Standards Bureau oversees, coordinates and investigates allegations of serious misconduct on the part of the County's law enforcement professionals and ECPO employees who violate the Office's Standard Operating Procedures. In addition, the Bureau handles crimes that are motivated by bigotry and non-fatal police shootings and police pursuits resulting in injury.

The Professional Standards Bureau is a vertical unit handling all of its own cases from inception through trial.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

The police corruption trial of East Orange Police Department Detective Norman Price was investigated and tried in 2006. Price and his wife, Natasha McCray, were charged with Theft, Official Misconduct and Money Laundering for using various shell companies to embezzle money from the city. The Bureau compiled evidence of the intricate and complex stream of financial transactions that Detective Price and his wife used to steal nearly \$100,000.00 in taxpayer funds from the City of East Orange. Norman Price was convicted and sentenced to 20 years. Natasha McCray was convicted and sentenced to 14 years.

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SEXUAL ASSAULT & RAPE ANALYSIS UNIT



The Sexual Assault and Rape Analysis (SARA) Unit is one of the oldest investigative units in the Essex County Prosecutor's Office. It originated in the 1970's after the Newark Police Department became one of the first police departments in the nation to establish a sex crimes unit. The SARA Unit was developed to provide guidance and investigative support for all municipal police departments within the County.

The SARA Unit originally handled all cases of sexual abuse within the Essex County Prosecutor's Office. As the field of sex crime investigation became more specialized in the early 1980's, a separate Child Abuse Unit was developed.

Today, the SARA Unit handles only those cases involving adult victims of sexual abuse. The legal staff consists of an Assistant Prosecutor/Director and two Assistant Prosecutors. The three sex crimes Detectives assigned to the Unit are supervised by an Investigative Captain. Members of the legal and investigative staff are available 24 hours a day to assist local law enforcement in their investigations.

The SARA Unit is a vertical unit, handling its cases from inception through trial. This approach eliminates the need for repetitive investigative interviews and protects the victim from the need to continually relive the abusive act.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

In the year 2006, the SARA Unit received 108 new complaints from municipal police departments and opened 103 original investigations. 71 cases were presented to the grand jury, resulting in 50 indictments. 18 cases resulted in pre-indictment pleas and 21 cases were downgraded and returned to the municipal court. There were 8 jury trials and 31 post indictment pleas. Three cases were resolved through Pre-Trial Intervention.

In 2007, the SARA Unit received 237 cases which included 111 original investigations. 84 cases were presented to the Grand Jury. 53 cases were billed.

South Mountain Reservation Initiative (with the Essex County Sheriff's Department) - After numerous complaints of adult males meeting to engage in sexual activity in an area of South Mountain reservation frequented by children, an initiative began which has resulted in numerous arrests.

State v. David Moses - This case involved a developmentally disabled victim, who was coerced into an automobile by the defendant and sexually assaulted in the town of Maplewood. The defendant was tried and convicted by Assistant Prosecutor Janice Massaro in February of 2006.

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VEHICULAR HOMICIDE UNIT



For the last 10 years, Essex County has averaged 80 fatal motor vehicle collisions a year. Most of these collisions meet the criteria for a criminal investigation. The Vehicular Homicide Unit is charged with investigating fatal traffic incidents, determining whether criminal liability is indicated, and prosecuting those responsible. The Unit also provides training in vehicular incident investigation for local law enforcement personnel, and implements uniform County-wide policies and procedures.

Local law enforcement agencies in Essex County immediately contact the Prosecutor's Office whenever a vehicle incident occurs involving a fatality or serious bodily injury. When necessary, the Prosecutor's Office dispatches members of the Vehicular Homicide Unit to the scene to assist local law enforcement in securing and preserving the scene as to prevent loss of evidence, and to accurately document the circumstances. The Vehicular Homicide Unit then works closely with local law enforcement and prepares appropriate cases for presentation to the Grand Jury and

further prosecution. The Vehicular Homicide Unit remains involved with most cases through final disposition.

2006 - 2007 Achievements:

In 2006, there were only 59 traffic fatalities in Essex County, the lowest number in 10 years. Since 2004, Essex County has seen a continuing drop in traffic collision fatalities. In addition to investigating 59 fatal motor vehicle incidents, the Vehicular Homicide Unit conducted an additional 29 non-fatal Motor Vehicle Special Investigations. A total of 30 cases were presented to the Essex County Grand Jury for 2006 with 15 resulting in criminal charges and 15 resulting in no cause for action. A total of 8 vehicular homicide cases were disposed of in 2006 by either a plea of guilty or by trial.

Several years ago, with funding support from the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, Detective Arnold Anderson of the Vehicular Homicide Unit created the **Smarter Drivers = Safer Streets** driver education program aimed initially at high school age students primarily in the African American and Latino communities where auto fatalities rates are highest in Essex County. This award winning program worked across a broad range of social, racial, cultural and economic circumstances. Due to its immense popularity, the program spread outside the confines of Essex County and is now being taught throughout New Jersey. It has been presented to over 6,000 students across New Jersey.

Results from a recent New Jersey Institute of Technology statewide seat belt usage survey revealed the statewide seatbelt usage rate has risen to 91.4% up from 90% in 2006. Essex County seatbelt usage went from 86.92% to 91.86%. Pro-active enforcement and educational programs have shown positive results in lowering the number of traffic related deaths in Essex County.

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