



Wednesday, September 9, 2020

## Nation-Leading Cuyahoga County Sexual Assault Kit Task Force Hits 800 Defendants Indicted, Includes Over 900 Victims

CLEVELAND – Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael C. O'Malley announced that the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office (CCPO) Sexual Assault Kit Task Force (SAKTF) has eclipsed 800 defendants indicted, the highest number of any SAKTF in the country, since its commencement in 2013. The number of indictments exceeds 900 victims as several defendants are convicted or alleged serial offenders.

"The Task Force's tireless efforts have brought over 800 sexual predators to justice," said Prosecutor O'Malley. "Despite this success, we know that more violent offenders remain lurking on our streets. We continue to explore new avenues to bring others who have evaded law enforcement to justice. Several new initiatives will be announced in the weeks to come."

This past week, the Task Force's efforts resulted in 13 more defendants indicted for several cold case sexual assaults. The **800<sup>th</sup> sex offender** indicted is **Angel Cruz**. On August 25, 2007, Cruz, 48, entered the victim's residence, on East 43rd Street in Cleveland, through a window and hid in her bedroom closet while wearing a mask. When the victim, 27, walked in, Cruz threw her on her bed, placed a mask over her head, and made threats while sexually assaulting her multiple times before he fled the scene. He is charged with **six counts of Rape** and **one count of Aggravated Burglary**.

Others indicted this past week include the following:

- **Jason Williams**, 40, is charged with **three counts of Rape**, **two counts of Kidnapping**, and **two counts of Gross Sexual Imposition**.
  - On January 3, 2002, Williams sexually assaulted the victim, 20, multiple times at his East 82nd residence in Cleveland.
  - On June 11, 2009, Williams approached the victim, 35, at a bus stop near Union Avenue and Broadway Avenue. He forced her to a nearby parking lot, choked her, and sexually assaulted her multiple times before fleeing the scene.
- **Shawn McGrath**, 51, is charged with **one count of Rape** and **one count of Kidnapping**.
  - On August 5, 2006, McGrath approached the victim, 35, in his vehicle near the steps of the Cleveland Public Library on Lorain Avenue near West 82nd Street. He exited his vehicle, picked her up, put her in his car, and drove to a nearby car wash where he sexually assaulted her before she was able to escape.
- **Milton Sherrod**, 35, and **Anthony Browning**, 38, are each charged with **one count of Rape** and **one count of Complicity**.
  - On May 31, 2004, Sherrod and Browning told the victim, 15, to get in their vehicle after leaving a party in Cleveland. While Sherrod was driving, Browning got into the back seat with the victim and sexually assaulted her. Shortly after, Sherrod pulled over, switched with Browning, and sexually assaulted the victim as well.
- **John Doe #166** is charged with **one count of Rape**, **one count of Robbery**, and **one count of Kidnapping**.
  - On September 16, 2002, the victim, 17, was walking home near East 86th Street and Meridian Avenue in Cleveland when an unknown male grabbed her from behind, put his hand over her mouth, and threatened to kill her. He forced her behind a nearby house and sexually assaulted her before fleeing the scene.

In 2013, the CCPO assembled the SAKTF to address investigative leads that resulted from the testing of previously unsubmitted rape kits primarily between 1993 to 2011. Since its inception, the Task Force has opened 7,024 investigations that have resulted in 809 defendants indicted. The cases include 906 victims and 850 identified serial sex offenders. Of those cases, the Task Force has secured a 93.2% conviction rate with offenders' average prison sentence being over 10 years. The SAKTF is led by the CCPO and includes the Cleveland Police Department, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation, Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department, Case Western Reserve University, and the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center.