

# NEWS RELEASE

**R. Andrew Murray**  
District Attorney

**December 16, 2015**

## **DA Murray presents awards honoring courageous actions, dedicated service**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Two young people who showed tremendous bravery during a domestic violence shooting, a paramedic who risked his life to save an impaired driver, a police officer whose work helped secure the conviction of a serial rapist and a prosecutor who volunteers her time to comfort people facing illness were honored today by District Attorney Andrew Murray.

The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office hosted its inaugural awards ceremony today to recognize individuals who have provided outstanding service to promote the mission of the District Attorney's Office and to improve the community as a whole. DA Murray plans to make the awards ceremony an annual tradition.

"From the victims who take the stand to face their assailants to my employees who volunteer their free time to help those in need, people are doing incredible things every day to protect and improve the community we call home," says DA Murray. "I am truly honored to recognize this year's award recipients for their brave actions and dedicated service."



**DA Murray recognizes those who have made a difference in the community during the inaugural District Attorney's Office awards ceremony.**

The winners of the 2015 District Attorney's Above and Beyond Citizen Awards are Quaysan Patterson, Chasity Reese and Landon Bush. This award commends victims or witnesses of a crime who exhibit extraordinary courage and responsibility by assisting in the apprehension of a defendant or participating in the prosecution of a case. Their selfless actions and bravery contributed to making a difference in the outcome of a case and helped hold criminals accountable for their actions.

Sgt. Troy Armstrong of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department received the Above and Beyond Law Enforcement Award, which honors a member of local law enforcement who has exhibited exemplary work in the field and has gone above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that the community is safer and that victims feel more secure. Assistant District Attorney Marina Fulton received the Bryan Crocker Award. This award recognizes a member of the District Attorney's Office who has worked outside of the courtroom to make Mecklenburg County a better place. The award is named for Assistant District Attorney Bryan Crocker, who

dedicated his career to public service. He passed away this year after a brave battle with cancer.

### **The Above and Beyond Citizen Award: Quaysan Patterson and Chasity Reese**



**Quaysan Patterson, Chasity Reese and DA Murray**

Mr. Patterson was 16 years old and his sister, Miss Reese, was 12 when they showed courage beyond their years during an extremely dangerous situation. Their mother was involved in an argument with her boyfriend, who had struck her across the face. She told him he had to leave, and as he was removing his belongings from the home, he produced a gun and began firing repeatedly. During the shooting, Mr. Patterson used his body to attempt to shield his mother and two younger siblings from the gunfire. Mr. Patterson was shot twice, and his mother was also shot. Miss Reese ran to a phone to call 911, went to a nearby window to see whether the shooter had left the home

and then dashed outside to flag down responding officers. The man was later convicted by a jury of multiple assault charges. Assistant District Attorney Madelaine Colbert, who nominated Mr. Patterson and Miss Reese, said she believes their testimony was critical in obtaining a guilty verdict. “In 15 years as a prosecutor, they are the bravest witnesses I’ve ever had testify in a case,” says ADA Colbert.

### **The Above and Beyond Citizen Award: Landon Bush**

As Mr. Bush was driving home at 4 a.m. from his shift as a paramedic, he swerved to avoid hitting a car that was sitting across three lanes of traffic on Interstate 485. Mr. Bush stopped and rushed into the road to check on the driver, who was impaired and had passed out at the wheel. Mr. Bush pulled the man from his car, took him to safety at the side of the road and returned into the interstate to move the man’s car to the road’s shoulder. He then called police and later provided testimony at trial that allowed prosecutors to secure a conviction of the impaired driver, who threatened the safety of local roadways. Mr. Bush saved the driver’s life, and he also saved unsuspecting motorists from being involved in a serious wreck.



**Landon Bush and DA Murray**

### **The Above and Beyond Law Enforcement Award: CMPD Sgt. Troy Armstrong**



**DA Murray and Sgt. Troy Armstrong**

In April 2015, [a jury found Fitzgerald Rice guilty](#) of multiple sex offenses, and he was sentenced to a minimum of 70 years in prison. The conviction of this dangerous offender would not have been possible without the diligent work of Sgt. Troy Armstrong of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department. In this case, the victim went with Rice to his Charlotte apartment in 2012. Rice soon turned violent, forcing her to perform a number of sex acts and repeatedly striking the victim in the face and head and choking her when she did not comply with his demands. Rice had sexually assaulted women before – making similar

threats and demands each time – in 1995, 1997 and 2001. While preparing the 2012 case for trial, prosecutors realized that they would face challenges in court, and they determined that, to

be successful at trial, they needed to find Rice’s previous victims and convince them to testify about the assaults that had occurred years ago. Sgt. Armstrong went to extraordinary lengths to help prosecutors identify and locate the women, even traveling across the state to look for them at their last known addresses. One of the victims called Sgt. Armstrong her “guardian angel.” “It is because of Sgt. Armstrong’s dogged persistence that the jury was able to hear remarkably similar stories of sexually assaultive behavior from four different women,” says Assistant District Attorney Leslie Stephens. “His exemplary work in this case helped our office secure a conviction against a serial rapist who preyed upon our community for more than 20 years.”

### **The Bryan Crocker Award: Assistant District Attorney Marina Fulton**

ADA Marina Fulton, a prosecutor on the DA’s Misdemeanor Appeals Team, has logged approximately 100 volunteer hours alongside her dog, Mandamus or “Manny.” After seeing the many benefits that pet therapy provided to her father while he battled cancer, ADA Fulton decided to volunteer her time at Brookdale Senior Living. ADA Fulton and Manny, who are pet therapy certified, spend about three hours every other weekend visiting patients who can no longer live without the assistance of health care professionals. Together, they have improved the mental and physical health of many patients at Brookdale, bringing smiles and comfort to all who meet them. ADA Fulton and Manny are currently working toward becoming certified to help patients who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. With a Veterans Affairs health care center opening soon in Charlotte, the duo plans to continue serving the community by assisting service members.



**DA Murray and ADA Marina Fulton**

*Note: For more information about the District Attorney’s Office, visit [www.charmeckda.com](http://www.charmeckda.com). For updates and other information, “like” the DA’s Office on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/charmeckda](http://www.facebook.com/charmeckda) and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.*

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