

NEWS RELEASE

Spencer B. Merriweather III
District Attorney

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DA Merriweather presents awards to honor service

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – A longtime serologist who played a critical role in a cold case, a deputy who works with domestic violence survivors, a protestor who stepped forward with key evidence, and a legal assistant who has done extensive volunteer work were honored today by Mecklenburg County District Attorney Spencer B. Merriweather III.

The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office hosted its fifth annual awards ceremony today to recognize individuals who have provided outstanding service to promote the mission of the District Attorney's Office, to better the criminal justice system and to improve the community as a whole.

Patricia Levins and Deputy Bobby Hood received the 2019 Above and Beyond Law Enforcement Award, a recognition of local law enforcement members who have exhibited exemplary work in the field and have gone above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that the community is safer and that victims feel more secure.



DA Merriweather presented awards to individuals who have provided outstanding service to the District Attorney's Office and the entire community.

The 2019 Above and Beyond Citizen Award was presented to Rasheed Ali. 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.

The Bryan Crocker Award was presented to Madison Morgan. This award recognizes employees of the District Attorney's Office who have worked outside of the courtroom to make the community a better place. The award is named for Assistant District Attorney Bryan Crocker, who dedicated his career to public service. He passed away in 2015 following a battle with cancer.

The Above and Beyond Law Enforcement Award: Patricia Levins

Ms. Levins was a longtime serologist in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department Crime Lab. She played a critical role in the identification of suspects, and she educated our prosecutors about the science of serology so that they would be able to share that information with jurors. Ms. Levins has been qualified to testify as an expert at trial more than 50 times. Although she retired last December, she took the stand again this year to testify about a case

she investigated more than 27 years ago. In January 1992, Ms. Levins was working as a CMPD crime scene technician when she was called to process the scene of a sexual assault and attempted murder. That night, a man had offered a young woman a ride home, and when they arrived, he expressed romantic interest in her. She declined. That sent him into a rage. The survivor would later tell a jury that he forced her into a bedroom and raped her. Then, he shot her in the face. Miraculously, she survived. She played dead and waited for the man to leave before calling for help. But the case went cold. It was not until decades later that a DNA hit in a national database produced the name of the suspect, Billy Joe Henry. As a crime scene technician, Ms. Levins took photos of the scene. Those photos depicted the bullet casing in the middle of the mattress next to the pillow where the survivor was lying when she was shot. When preparing for trial, Ms. Levins located her original notes explaining the scene, as well as the list of items collected. This corroborative evidence was crucial. [In October 2019, a jury convicted Billy Joe Henry, and he was sentenced to 60 years in prison, finally securing long-awaited justice for this survivor.](#) In this office's many years of working with Ms. Levins, it has always been clear just how deeply she cares about her work and the people of this community.



The Above and Beyond Law Enforcement Award: Deputy Bobby Hood

Deputy Hood is a Charlotte native and Marine Corps veteran who has been working with the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office for more than 28 years. For the last approximately five years, Deputy Hood has been assigned to work at the District Attorney's Office, serving domestic violence victims. Domestic violence cases are among the most difficult cases to prosecute in part because it can be challenging to convince a victim who has been abused, isolated and threatened to push forward through the court process. The Special Victims Team prosecutor who nominated Deputy Hood says when victims will not talk to anyone else, they will talk to Deputy Hood. The nominator recalled a serious case involving a particularly vulnerable victim, a pregnant woman. Deputy Hood drove the prosecutor across Gaston County, going to multiple houses and addresses in search of this victim. When the pair was unsuccessful that day, Deputy Hood spent more time on his own in an effort to locate her. He ultimately succeeded, even bringing her to the District Attorney's Office for a face-to-face meeting. Deputy Hood walks through the Special Victims Team's offices every morning, asking each prosecutor if there is anything he can do to help them. And although he already has a large workload, he volunteered to help the misdemeanor domestic violence unit while one of its investigators was out of the office. His work ethic and dedication are next to none.



The Above and Beyond Citizen Award: Rasheed Ali

On September 21, 2016, in the wake of the officer-involved shooting death of Keith Lamont Scott, Justin Carr came to uptown Charlotte to peaceably protest, joining community members who had gathered to make their voices heard. Rayquan Borum came to uptown armed with a gun to wreak havoc. At a moment of civil unrest, Borum produced his gun and pulled the trigger. The shot struck Justin Carr in the head, fatally wounding him. Also there that night was Mr. Ali. Mr. Ali has long been passionate about his concerns surrounding police brutality, and he has taken part in other protests elsewhere. Mr. Ali was filming Charlotte-Mecklenburg police at the moment Borum shot Mr. Carr. Many people



amplified the chaos surrounding the protests and Mr. Carr's death by spreading misinformation about what happened that night. When he returned home to South Carolina, Mr. Ali heard about the misinformation that had begun circulating. He knew the truth. And despite the fact that police had arrested him that night for misdemeanor failure to disperse, he contacted CMPD to provide his footage, which helped to show that the person responsible for Mr. Carr's death was Rayquan Borum. When the case proceeded to trial in February 2019, Mr. Ali took the stand, testifying about the protest and authenticating his own video. [A jury found Borum guilty of second-degree murder and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon](#). Mr. Ali arrived in Charlotte to exercise his constitutional right to grievance. In bearing witness to what he saw, he exhibited the kind of courage and selflessness necessary for the District Attorney's Office to hold Justin Carr's murderer accountable and secure justice for Mr. Carr and his family.

The Bryan Crocker Award: Madison Morgan

Ms. Morgan is a member of the District Attorney's support staff who works with the Crimes Against Property Team. Ms. Morgan's acts of service to the community and those in need are extensive. She donates clothes and other items to Turning Point's Second Chance Boutiques and Home Décor, which provides vouchers to domestic violence survivors to obtain furniture and clothing. She assists a family friend who has a daughter with cerebral palsy. In the past, she has participated in advocacy training with Present Age Ministries, a faith-based organization that works to combat sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking of teen girls. In her car, she carries bags she has packed with toiletries, water, snacks and Bible verses for the homeless. She is currently collecting feminine products to donate to the homeless shelter in Monroe. The colleague who nominated her says Ms. Morgan has a heart of gold and the gift of mercy.



Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at www.facebook.com/charmeckda and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.

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