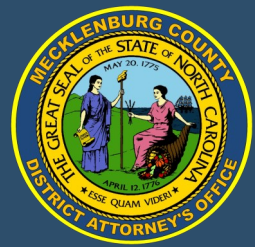




# FROM THE DESK OF DA MERRIWEATHER

The District Attorney's Office is responsible for the prosecution of criminal offenses in Mecklenburg County. Each month, this newsletter provides information about court happenings, initiatives being used to combat crime, the DA's work in the community, and more.



## Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office

### YEAR IN REVIEW

#### Looking back at 2021

As 2021 comes to a close, I would like to take the opportunity to share some of the amazing work your public servants at the District Attorney's Office have accomplished this year.

- We worked to utilize all available court time. In March, one Superior Court trial courtroom reopened after months of COVID-related closures, and that has been the sole courtroom available for felony trials all year. Over the course of 33 weeks of trial thus far in 2021, we tried 26 cases as we secured justice for [homicide victims](#) and their families, [children](#) who experienced [sexual abuse](#), and more.
- Our [Diversity and Inclusion Team](#) launched a [curriculum](#) required of all DA's Office employees to challenge us to gain a better understanding of the diverse communities we serve.
- We led a 14-week trial session to address the backlog of driving while impaired cases caused by COVID-19 court closures. Our prosecutors [resolved 627 cases](#).
- We continued working with partners to establish [The Umbrella Center](#), a family justice center that will provide a one-stop location to provide services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, child abuse, elder abuse, and human trafficking. In February, the [Survivor Resource Center](#), a precursor to the family justice center, opened for high-risk survivors.

I continue to be inspired by those in and out of our office working to build a justice system that serves all people with equity and dignity. This holiday season, I wish you and your loved ones joy and peace.

*Spencer B. Merriweather III*

Visit [www.charmeckda.com](http://www.charmeckda.com) for the latest news, information about the courts and more. Follow @charmeckda on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

### OUR SCHOOLS

DA Merriweather organized and [led a meeting](#) on Dec. 2 among government, schools, and law enforcement leaders who will now work together to address the increased number of weapons discovered at local schools this year and the rise in youth violence. The group identified some common themes and concerns, and there was a consensus that as the group moves forward, they must bring students to the table to help develop effective and meaningful strategies.



### SAFETY TIPS

To keep your holidays merry, be sure to keep safety and crime prevention in mind! As you are shopping, do not leave purchases visible in your vehicle, and always lock your car. At home, keep your trees and shrubbery trimmed to keep doors and windows unconcealed, and turn on outdoor lights after dark or use lights activated by sensors. Network with your neighbors to prevent package thefts. Be sure to review [fire safety tips](#) when decorating your home, and check your smoke detectors. And finally, use caution on the roads and ensure you have a designated driver for holiday gatherings.

### FAQ: Do you track conviction rates or reward prosecutors with high conviction rates?

Absolutely not. In fact, this notion runs contrary to our office's values and ethics. Why? Because a conviction rate does not reflect whether we are doing our work fairly and effectively. There are times when justice demands we dismiss a case. Perhaps there is insufficient evidence to prove someone committed a crime or a young person deserves a second chance. We've even had prosecutors who discovered the wrong person was accused. We celebrate prosecutors who do the right thing—no matter what that means for statistics.