



March 14, 2025

## **G.O.L.D. Unit Identifies Seven Cold-Case Sexual Assault Offenders Utilizing Familial DNA Searching and Forensic Genetic Genealogy**

CLEVELAND – Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael C. O'Malley announced that the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office's (CCPO) G.O.L.D. Unit (Genetic Operations Linking DNA) has identified John Doe #112 as suspect Douglas Freeman, John Doe #180 as suspect Ellis Williams, John Doe #95 as suspect Darien Eiland, John Doe #134 as suspect Gary Tennyson, John Doe #188 as suspect Vinson Miller, John Doe #18 as suspect Bruce Williams, and John Doe #100 as suspect Edmund Scott Sr. utilizing familial DNA searching and forensic genetic genealogy.

"I would like to thank the G.O.L.D. Unit investigators and prosecutors, the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department for their hard work in helping to solve these cases and arrest these violent offenders," said Prosecutor O'Malley. "Victims of crime will not be forgotten in Cuyahoga County and my office along with our law enforcement partners will continue to fight every day to provide answers and justice to them."

### **Familial Searching**

#### **John Doe #112**

On June 11, 1996, the 18-year-old female victim was waiting for the bus near West 98th Street and Lorain Avenue in Cleveland. Two unknown males approached the victim and offered her a ride. She asked if they could drive her to a specific location and they agreed. They then drove her to an abandoned house near Rutland Avenue and Hazeldell Road in Cleveland, and sexually assaulted her. After the sexual assault, they drove the victim near West 25th Street and Detroit Avenue and kicked her out of the vehicle. A Good Samaritan nearby picked up the victim and drove her to a nearby hospital where a sexual assault kit was collected.

A unique male DNA profile was developed from the victim's sexual assault kit but did not produce any leads in the offender DNA database. As a result, prosecutors obtained a John Doe indictment against the DNA profile to ensure that the statute of limitations did not expire. The profile, known as "John Doe #112," was charged with the following:

- **Two counts of Rape**
- **One count of Kidnapping**
- **Two counts of Complicity**

The CCPO submitted John Doe #112's DNA profile to the Ohio Attorney General's Office (AGO) for familial DNA searching. AGO was able to connect John Doe #112's DNA profile to that of Douglas Freeman, now 61. As a result of additional investigation and forensic analysis, including DNA comparisons, CCPO



determined that Douglas Freeman is John Doe #112. The original John Doe #112 indictment was amended to reflect his true name as the defendant. Freeman was arrested by the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department on November 8, 2024.

Steven Ward, now 53, was previously identified as the second assailant and was prosecuted by this office in 2017.

### John Doe #180

On April 13, 2012, the 22-year-old female victim attended a party with her friends near Denison Avenue and West 69th Street in Cleveland. Two unknown males approached the victim and offered her a drink that made her feel paralyzed. The two unknown males then sexually assaulted the victim. After the sexual assault, the victim's friends found her and transported her to a hospital where a sexual assault kit was collected.

Two unique male DNA profiles were developed from the victim's sexual assault kit but did not produce any leads in the offender DNA database. As a result, prosecutors obtained John Doe indictments against the DNA profiles to ensure that the statute of limitations did not expire. The profiles, known as "John Doe #180" and "John Doe #181," were charged with the following:

- **Four counts of Rape**
- **Two counts of Gross Sexual Imposition**

The CCPO submitted John Doe #180's DNA profile to the Ohio Attorney General's Office (AGO) for familial DNA searching. AGO was able to connect John Doe #180's DNA profile to that of Ellis Williams, now 35. As a result of additional investigation and forensic analysis, including DNA comparisons, CCPO determined that Ellis Williams is John Doe #180. The original John Doe #180 indictment was amended to reflect his true name as the defendant. Williams was arrested by the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department on November 18, 2024.

**John Doe #181 remains unidentified. If you have any information on this incident, please contact the G.O.L.D. Unit at 216.443.6679.**

### John Doe #95

On October 4, 1995, the 19-year-old female victim was walking near East 110th Street and St. Clair Avenue in Cleveland. Two unknown males approached the victim in a car. They pointed a gun at the victim and ordered her to get inside their vehicle. They drove to a motel on Euclid Avenue and entered a motel room. One of the males then sexually assaulted the victim. After the sexual assault, the two unknown males robbed the victim and fled the scene. The victim went to a hospital where a sexual assault kit was collected.

A unique male DNA profile was developed from the victim's sexual assault kit but did not produce any leads in the offender DNA database. As a result, prosecutors obtained a John Doe indictment against the DNA



profile to ensure that the statute of limitations did not expire. The profile, known as "John Doe #95," was charged with the following:

- **Two counts of Rape**
- **One count of Aggravated Robbery**
- **Two counts of Kidnapping**

The CCPO submitted John Doe #95's DNA profile to the Ohio Attorney General's Office (AGO) for familial DNA searching. AGO was able to connect John Doe #95's DNA profile to that of Darien Eiland, now 54. As a result of additional investigation and forensic analysis, including DNA comparisons, CCPO determined that Darien Eiland is John Doe #95. The original John Doe #95 indictment was amended to reflect his true name as the defendant. Eiland was arrested by the West Chester Township Police Department with assistance from the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department on December 2, 2024.

### John Doe #134

On May 17, 1998, the 26-year-old female victim was walking on Old River Road in the Flats in Downtown Cleveland. An unknown male approached the victim, grabbed her, and forced her into a semi-truck. He then beat and sexually assaulted the victim. After the sexual assault, he released her from the vehicle. The victim went to a hospital where a sexual assault kit was collected.

A unique male DNA profile was developed from the victim's sexual assault kit but did not produce any leads in the offender DNA database. As a result, prosecutors obtained a John Doe indictment against the DNA profile to ensure that the statute of limitations did not expire. The profile, known as "John Doe #134," was charged with the following:

- **One count of Rape**
- **Two counts of Kidnapping**
- **Two counts of Aggravated Robbery**

The CCPO submitted John Doe #134's DNA profile to the Ohio Attorney General's Office (AGO) for familial DNA searching. AGO was able to connect John Doe #134's DNA profile to that of Gary Tennyson, age 28 at the time of his death in September 1998. Tennyson died in a motor vehicle accident four months after the attack. As a result of additional investigation and forensic analysis, including DNA comparisons, CCPO determined that Gary Tennyson is John Doe #134. The original John Doe #134 indictment was amended to reflect his true name as the defendant. Because Tennyson is deceased the charges against him were dismissed as abated by death.

### John Doe #188

On August 15, 2012, the 24-year-old victim went with family members to an establishment near Urbana Road and Euclid Avenue in Cleveland. Later in the evening, the victim exited the establishment, got into their car, and fell asleep in the back seat. An unknown male entered the vehicle and sexually assaulted her.



The victim woke up during the assault but lost consciousness again. The unknown male then fled the scene. The victim's family transported her to a hospital where a sexual assault kit was collected.

A unique male DNA profile was developed from the victim's sexual assault kit but did not produce any leads in the offender DNA database. As a result, prosecutors obtained a John Doe indictment against the DNA profile to ensure that the statute of limitations did not expire. The profile, known as "John Doe #188," was charged with the following:

- **Four counts of Rape**

The CCPO submitted John Doe #188's DNA profile to the Ohio Attorney General's Office (AGO) for familial DNA searching. AGO was able to connect John Doe #188's DNA profile to that of Vinson Miller, now 39. As a result of additional investigation and forensic analysis, including DNA comparisons, CCPO determined that Vinson Miller is John Doe #188. The original John Doe #188 indictment was amended to reflect his true name as the defendant. Miller was arrested by the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department on December 9, 2024.

## John Doe #100

On November 13, 1995, the 28-year-old female victim was walking near East 105<sup>th</sup> Street and St. Clair Avenue in Cleveland when a vehicle pulled up. An unknown male exited the vehicle. He asked the victim if he could walk with her, then he grabbed her throat, pushed her down and sexually assaulted her. After the sexual assault, he fled the scene, and a passerby observed the victim crying and shaking and walked her home, where she called 911. The victim was transported to a hospital and a sexual assault kit was collected.

A unique male DNA profile was developed from the victim's sexual assault kit but did not produce any leads in the offender DNA database. As a result, prosecutors obtained a John Doe indictment against the DNA profile to ensure that the statute of limitations did not expire. The profile, known as "John Doe #100," was charged with the following:

- **One count of Rape**
- **One count of Kidnapping**

The CCPO submitted John Doe #100's DNA profile to the Ohio Attorney General's Office (AGO) for familial DNA searching. AGO was able to connect John Doe #100's DNA profile to that of Edmund Scott, Sr. As a result of additional investigation and forensic analysis, including DNA comparisons, CCPO determined that Edmund Scott, Sr. is John Doe #100. The original John Doe #100 indictment was amended to reflect his true name as the defendant. Scott Sr. was arrested by the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department on March 14, 2025.

## Forensic Genetic Genealogy

### John Doe #18



On January 29, 1994, the 21-year-old female victim got off the bus near East 131st Street and Corlett Avenue in Cleveland and started walking to her first day of work at a new job. An unknown male approached the victim and forced her at knifepoint behind the former Alexander Hamilton School near Kinsman Avenue and East 130th Street in Cleveland. He sexually assaulted her then fled the scene. After the sexual assault, the victim walked to her work and called the police. She was transported to a hospital where a sexual assault kit was collected.

On September 25, 1995, the 27-year-old female victim was waiting to get into a shelter near East 30th Street and Euclid Avenue in Cleveland. An unknown male approached her and asked her for a lighter. When the victim handed him her lighter, he grabbed her and forced her inside his vehicle. He held her at knifepoint as he drove to an area near East 32nd Street and Cedar Avenue in Cleveland, where he sexually and physically assaulted her. After the sexual assault, he pushed her out of his vehicle and fled the scene. The victim was transported to a hospital where a sexual assault kit was collected.

A unique male DNA profile was developed from the victims' sexual assault kits but did not produce any leads in the offender DNA database. As a result, prosecutors obtained a John Doe indictment against the DNA profile to ensure that the statute of limitations did not expire. The profile, known as "John Doe #18," was charged with the following:

- **Seven counts of Rape**
- **One count of Attempted Rape**
- **Two counts of Kidnapping**

The CCPO and the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation's DNA lab (BCI) reviewed the evidence and sent John Doe 18's DNA profile to genealogy laboratory Gene by Gene. From there, investigative genetic genealogists at Firebird Forensics were able to connect John Doe #18's DNA profile to that of Bruce Williams, age 53 at the time of his death on September 30, 2017. As a result of additional investigation and forensic analysis, including DNA comparisons, CCPO determined that Bruce Williams is John Doe #18. The original John Doe #18 indictment was amended to reflect his true name as the defendant. Because Williams is deceased the charges against him were dismissed as abated by death.

### **SAKTF / G.O.L.D Unit History**

Since its inception, the work of the Sexual Assault Kit Task Force (SAKTF) has resulted in the indictments of over 960 defendants, the highest number of any SAKTF in the country. The number of indictments includes crimes committed upon over 1,050 victims because several defendants are convicted or alleged serial offenders.

In 2019 and 2020, the CCPO's Sexual Assault Kit Task Force (SAKTF) was awarded grants from the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance SAKI program. Part of that funding helped launch the office's G.O.L.D. Unit in October 2020.

Prosecutor O'Malley formed the G.O.L.D. Unit to review unsolved cold cases, conduct follow-up investigations, and review evidence for the potential of applying advanced forensic techniques. In 2021,



2022, and 2023, the G.O.L.D. Unit was awarded additional DOJ SAKI grants, including funding for the application of forensic genetic genealogy (FGG) and familial DNA searches to unsolved sexual assaults, homicides, and other violent crimes.

The unit's work includes the Sexual Assault Kit Task Force, the Cold Case Initiative, and Genealogy. To date, 62 DNA profiles in violent crime cases have been submitted for FGG and/or familial DNA searches, 16 offenders have been identified, and 23 rape cases have been solved.

The SAKTF / G.O.L.D. Unit is led by the CCPO in partnership with the research team led by Dr. Rachel Lovell, director of Cleveland State University's Criminology Research Center, and includes the Cleveland Division of Police, the Ohio Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation, the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office, and the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center.