

THE

PEOPLE'S REPORT

DISTRICT ATTORNEY WILLIAMS, OPDA
DELIVERS RESULTS IN YEAR ONE



A LETTER FROM THE DA



My fellow New Orleanians,

I was honored to be inaugurated as your District Attorney on January 11, 2021. And what a year it's been! It's hard to believe that 2022 is already upon us. And yet, as I reflect back on my first year as DA, I'm proud of all that my office has accomplished in this short period of time. We've made significant strides in increasing safety; delivering justice; investing in our youth and stemming juvenile violence; supporting victims and survivors; rebuilding public trust and transparency; and generally building a 21st century prosecutor's office. And I'm confident that these advances will impact each and every one of you and our community as a whole, in both the short- and long-term, in a positive way.

Despite the challenges of 2021 — from new COVID variants to Hurricane Ida and their resulting court closures — I have not wavered on my commitment to build an Orleans Parish District Attorney's Office that is smart on crime to actually increase safety in neighborhoods. After decades of mass producing convictions and incarcerations without any corresponding decrease in crime, we're now simultaneously increasing safety and delivering justice with a laser focus on prosecuting serious offenses, taking offenders off the streets, and doing it in a way that restores our burden as prosecutors to prove guilt to once and for all end the cycle of innocent people being taken away from their communities unfairly.

This strategy primarily entails focusing on accepting and prosecuting crimes that make our families and neighborhoods less safe, while also righting the wrongs of the past that have led to New Orleans being both the incarceration capital and exoneration capital of the world while doing nothing to truly protect our communities.

Our efforts have borne fruit over the course of 2021 with on-the-ground, community-centered achievements like: bringing 86 people home to their families from prison, including 49 people who were sentenced to life

without parole; literally doubling the size of our Victim/Witness services staff, including placing our office's first ever Victim/Witness Advocate in the Juvenile Division; launching a brand new website (www.oreansda.com), which includes the first of many public data dashboards; and signing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the City of New Orleans and New Orleans Public Library System to open DA Satellite Offices in low-income neighborhoods in 2022.

At the same time, we didn't let those aforementioned court closures stop us from holding offenders accountable. In 2021, the DA's Office obtained 58 grand jury indictments for violent crimes committed in New Orleans. We've also secured guilty pleas in over 1,700 cases, with 3,000 charges resulting in guilty pleas as part of these cases.

And in pursuing our mission to increase safety and deliver justice, we're actually saving you money. For example, we settled three years of litigation against former DA's Office administrations for prosecutorial misconduct, saving taxpayers more financial exposure and legal fees. And in vacating the excessive sentences of nearly 100 people who had served more than 20 years of life or life equivalent sentences, we saved the State at least five million dollars a year in Department of Corrections incarceration costs.

I encourage you to read through the more complete list of our office's 2021 accomplishments on the pages that follow.

As we venture into the new year, I believe that the DA's Office has begun to construct a foundation for even greater successes ahead. As has been the case since my inauguration, I welcome your input. And I promise to continue bringing you along in this journey of building a 21st century prosecutor's office of which all of you can be proud.

SINCERELY,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to the District Attorney, positioned at the end of the letter.

YEAR ONE PRIORITIES

Nationally profiled as one of the most transformative prosecutors in the United States, District Attorney Jason Williams is working to increase safety and deliver justice in New Orleans – a city with one of the highest rates of violent crime, mass incarceration, and wrongful convictions in the country.

In less than one year in office, DA Williams has prioritized collaboration with law enforcement and community partners to properly and successfully prosecute violent crimes, divert mental health and substance abuse cases to treatment, and enhance public trust and cooperation in investigations by resolving wrongful convictions and increasing transparency. DA Williams' bold vision is to build the best 21st century prosecutor's office in the United States.

INCREASING SAFETY



DELIVERING JUSTICE



INVESTING IN OUR YOUTH



INCREASING VICTIM/WITNESS &
DIVERSION SUPPORTS



REBUILDING PUBLIC
TRUST/TRANSPARENCY



BUILDING 21ST CENTURY
PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE





INCREASING SAFETY

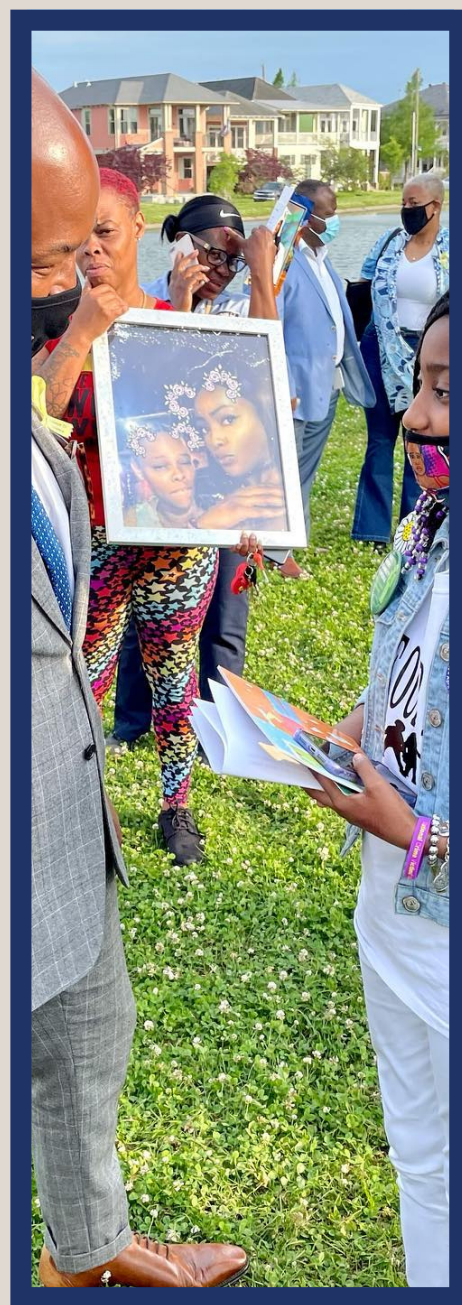


- Prioritized **prosecuting violent crime** (murders, shootings, sex crimes, armed robberies).
- **Secured 58 Grand Jury Indictments** in violent crime cases.
- Partnered with local, state, and federal law enforcement officials to **launch the Serial Crimes Initiative**, which will increase our efforts to better understand the connectivity of serious crimes like shootings, murders, armed robbery, and car jackings; build stronger cases; and secure prosecution of those who are constantly terrorizing our neighborhoods and families.
- Launched **new Cold Case Unit** to solve murders, get people who are committing violent crimes off the streets, and bring healing to families.
- Announced **first grand jury indictment and arrest** obtained in part by the **Cold Case Unit**, for murder and robbery of Tulane graduate committed over Mother's Day weekend in 2016.
- Worked to **reduce dockets and address massive case backlog due to COVID-19** and screening practices of prior DA's Office administration, by securing guilty pleas and dismissing hundreds of low-level cases fairly and efficiently.
- Secured **guilty pleas in over 1,700 cases**, with **3,000 charges resulting in guilty pleas** as part of these cases.
- Launched **new Narcotics Unit** to prevent drug overdose deaths and increase treatment.
- As part of specialized Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Unit work, **indicted or charged defendants in 11 separate rapes committed by previously unknown offenders**, including one that dates all the way back to 1975; and obtained guilty pleas related to 14 separate incidents of sexual assault and related home burglaries.
- Successfully **defended conviction of cop killer**.
- **Secured nearly \$2.4 million in new federal grants** to increase **DNA testing, re-entry services, conviction reviews, and racially motivated cold case homicides**.
- Implemented **alternatives to incarceration for low-level non-violent offenses** to reduce mass incarceration.
- Launched **new Trial Assistants Division** to increase administrative support to ADAs.



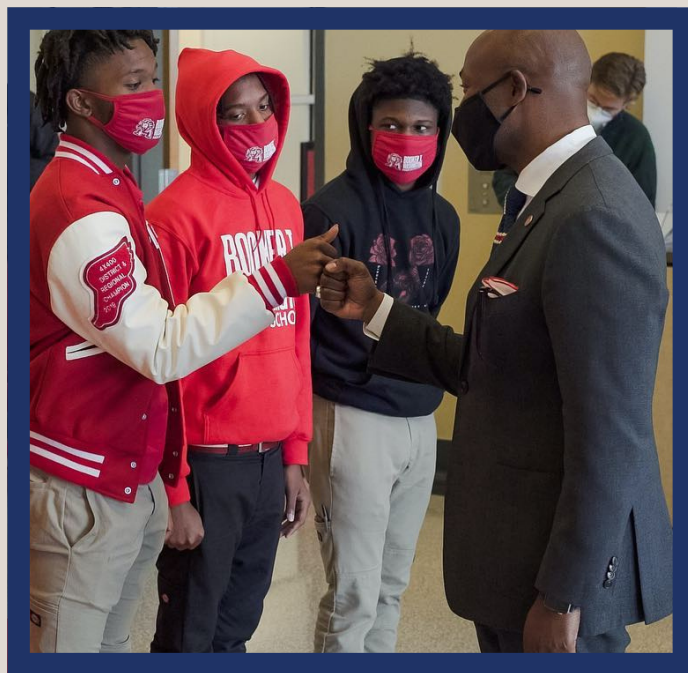
DELIVERING JUSTICE

- Launched **first Civil Rights Division** to correct the sins of the past.
- Implemented new policy to **end use of habitual offender statute** and **initiated review of over 400 sentences** enhanced by the statute under prior administrations.
- **Vacated sentences on nearly 100 people who have served more than 20 years of life or life equivalent sentences, saving the State at least five million dollars a year** in Department of Corrections costs.
- Implemented new policy to **no longer automatically oppose pardon and parole applications**, but rather leave that decision to corrections professionals.
- Provided trainings to all staff on **race discrimination in jury selection** and vacated a prior conviction based upon **Batson violations**.
- Provided training to all staff on **prosecutorial ethics**, and vacated prior convictions based upon **Brady violations**.
- Launched **Undoing Jim Crow Juries Civil Rights Initiative** to begin repairing 120+ years of injustice from non-unanimous juries.
- **Rectified the wrongful convictions of 50 people** – many of whom were convicted by Louisiana’s Jim Crow non-unanimous jury law.
 - The cases include: Mr. Jermaine Hudson, who spent 22 years of a 99-year sentence for a crime that never happened; Mr. Yutico Briley, who was released from jail after serving 9 years of a 60-year sentence for a crime that he didn’t commit; and Ms. Betty Broaden, who served nearly 38 years of a life without parole sentence for shooting and killing a man who had threatened to kill her with a gun, attacked her, and sexually assaulted her multiple times in her own home over the course of the night.
- Brought 86 people home from prison to their families and communities, including 49 people who were sentenced to life without parole.





INVESTING IN OUR YOUTH



- Hired **new Juvenile Division Chief**, who is leading our efforts to stem juvenile repeat crime, increase smart interventions, and ensure we appropriately hold youth accountable for their actions.
- Implemented new policies to **eliminate transfer of children to adult court**, with limited exceptions and blended sentencing opportunities for murder cases.
- Hosted **Youth Violence Prevention and Accountability Summit**.
- Closely partnered with the Louisiana Department of Children & Family Services to **collect millions of dollars in child support**, and to emphasize the importance of our obligation to all our community's children.
- Hosted the first of many **family-based activities for children, teens, and families in our city**.
- Revamped the office's **Juvenile Diversion Program and expanded our community partnerships** to ensure trauma-informed, case management, and wrap-around services.



INCREASING VICTIM/WITNESS & DIVERSION SUPPORTS

- Launched Restorative Justice Diversion pilot program.
- Doubled the size of Victim/Witness services staff, including placing first ever Victim/Witness Advocate in Juvenile Division.
- Implemented new policy to no longer practice post-plea diversion.
- Hosted two Domestic Violence Awareness Month panel discussions with partner agency experts on resources and barriers for survivors in New Orleans.





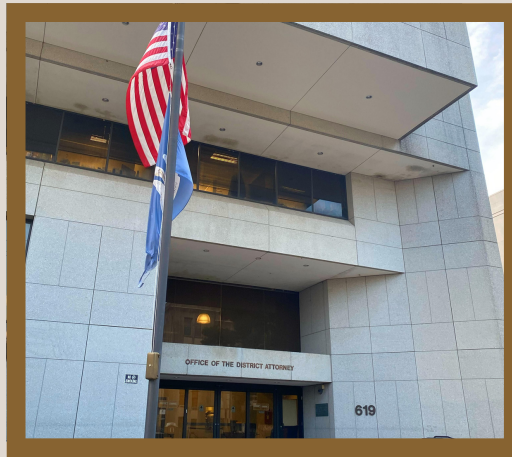
REBUILDING PUBLIC TRUST/TRANSPARENCY



- Secured **partnership with Prosecutorial Performance Indicators initiative** to increase transparency, give public access to data, and improve performance measurement.
- Hired the office's **first ever in-house Data Analyst**.
- Launched **brand new website**, which includes the first of many **public data dashboards**.
- Launched **public education series to bring the public along on DA's Office reforms**, beginning with a panel discussion on domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.
- Signed Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the City of New Orleans and New Orleans Public Library System to open **DA Satellite Offices in low-income neighborhoods in 2022**.
- **Opened the office more widely to public records and media inquiries**, including through interviews with news outlets such as 60 Minutes, the New York Times, NBC News, Time Magazine, the Atlantic, the Guardian, NPR, PBS, The Lens, The Times-Picayune | The New Orleans Advocate, WWNO, WGNO, WWL TV, WDSU, and WVUE.
- **Participated in quarterly People's DA Coalition events** to ensure accountability.



BUILDING 21ST CENTURY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE



- Issued salary increases for lowest paid ADAs.
- Implemented office's first ever paid parental leave policy.
- Hired a Director of Partnerships and Development, who is working to ensure that the office and our community partners have the resources needed to implement innovative programs to better our community.
- Settled three years of litigation against former DA's Office administrations for prosecutorial misconduct, saving taxpayers more financial exposure and awarding \$2.18 million.
- Implemented new electronic case management system, Prosecutor by Karpel, to organize and manage dockets.
- Launched new comprehensive monthly training program for attorneys and staff.
- Launched summer internship program, and welcomed our first cohort of law clerks to support attorneys in the office.
- Established a partnership with Howard University for internships.
- Brought in federal funding to double the size of our Civil Rights Division in the coming year.

PROMISES MADE.
PROMISES KEPT.



READY FOR YEAR TWO!

