

- Congratulations to Sexual Battery Unit (SBU) ASAs Bronwyn Nayci and Lily Wisset for securing a guilty verdict of one count of Sexual Activity with a Child by a Person in Familial or Custodial Authority, three counts of Lewd and Lascivious Molestation on a Child 12-16 Years of Age, and two counts of Lewd and Lascivious Conduct on a Child Under 16.

The Victim's mother had been dating the Defendant for about a year. On the evening of July 16, 2020, the Defendant went into the Victim's bedroom so she could help him learn English. After talking with the Victim for a short time, the Defendant told her to go to sleep. The Victim laid down in her bed and pretended to go to sleep hoping he would leave her bedroom. Instead, the Defendant got up, closed, and locked the Victim's bedroom door, and asked if she was asleep. The Victim, frozen in fear, did not respond. Then, the Defendant touched the Victim, kissed her, and touched her private areas inappropriately. The Defendant told the Victim, "I'll protect you and love you forever." After the Defendant left, the Victim immediately told her mother that the Defendant had touched her, and the police were called. The Victim was examined hours later by the Child Protection Team who later found the Defendant's DNA.

At trial, the defense focused on attacking the reliability of the DNA testing and the interview techniques used by the forensic interviewer. However, the jury was convinced of the Defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The ASAs would like to thank SBU ASAs Jared Lorenz, Marie Koth; Guardian Ad Litem Katrina Valentine for her support of the Victim and her mother during the trial; William Rodriguez, our English-Spanish translator, for assisting with trial preparations with the Victim's mother; the Litigation Support Team for their help during the trial with exhibits, audio extractions, and the ELMO.

The ASAs would also like to thank SBU Victim/Witness Coordinator Nancy Germeille for supporting the Victim, and for her assistance in coordinating our witnesses. A special thank you to SBU secretaries Charlotte Haslem and Valerie Ford for assisting with trial preparations.

- Congratulations to Sexual Battery Unit (SBU) ASA Jared H. Lorenz and ASA Gabriella Marki for securing a guilty verdict of one count of Attempted Sexual Battery on a Minor Under 12, one count of Lewd and Lascivious Exhibition on a Child Under 16, and one count of Lewd and Lascivious Conduct on a Child Under 16.

In the early morning of December 20, 2019, the Victim woke up to use the restroom at around 3:30 or 4 a.m. The Victim noticed the Defendant lurking in her doorway, so she pretended to be asleep. The Victim watched the Defendant walk down the hall to another room before immediately returning to enter her bedroom and closing the door behind him. He asked the Victim if she had ever "done it before." Startled, she said, "No." He asked, "What would you do if I dated you." The Victim responded, "I would not be dating you." He then told her that he wanted to have sex with her. The Victim demanded that he get out of her room. Instead, he sat down on her bed and began to

caress her knee as he told her about how he was abused at a young age and how he wanted to do it to someone else. "You are perfect to do it with," he told her. When she continued to say to him "No" and to leave her room, he began to threaten her. The Defendant stood up, exposed himself, and fondled himself in front of the Victim. The Victim quickly turned her head to look away and began to scream as loud as she could for help. The Defendant then put both of his hands over the Victim's mouth, trying to keep her quiet. When the Victim struggled and continued to scream, her parents rushed to her room and found the Defendant standing outside of her door. The Victim's father yelled, "What are you doing in my daughter's room?" The Defendant responded, "I did something bad. I understand if you want to hurt me." He then fled, leaving his sandals in the Victim's bedroom.

The Defendant chose to testify at trial. He testified that he had been drinking all day with the Victim's father. He said that at some point during the night, the Victim's father went upstairs to bed. The Defendant testified that he heard an argument upstairs between the Victim's parents and went upstairs to check to see if everything was okay. However, he admitted that he did not attempt to knock on the door or see if they were okay. Instead, he said he went into the other bedrooms to see if anyone was awake to "talk." The Defendant exited the other rooms before observing the Victim walking back into her room. He entered, took off his sandals, and sat on her bed. He testified that the purpose of going into her bedroom was to express his concern. He said he had heard something concerning a relative who may have been molested by another relative and wanted to talk to the Victim about it. The Defendant admitted to putting his hand on her mouth but only to calm her down. He said that he told her that he was not there to hurt her.

After approximately two hours of deliberation, the jury found the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt on all three counts.

The Judge accepted the State's recommendation and sentenced the defendant to 20 years in state prison followed by 10 years of Sex Offender Probation.

The ASAs would like to thank Sexual Battery Unit (SBU) Assistant State Attorneys Bronwyn Nayci, Marie Koth, Lily Wisset for their support during trial; SBU Victim/Witness Coordinator Nancy Germeille for supporting the victim and coordinating witness travel; SBU secretaries Charlotte Haslem and Valerie Ford for assisting with trial preparations; and Forensic Interviewer Meranda Perlant.

Additionally, the ASAs would like to thank the Chief of Misdemeanor Domestic Violence Unit Lindsay Davis for her help in preparing the case for trial, ASAs Carolina Sanchez, Conor Soper, and Natalie Mendez for their assistance before and during the trial.

- Congratulations to DC Alex Bergida and ASA Julianne Ruiz-Necuze, who were successful in securing a guilty verdict of 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Murder.

The Defendant was harassing his ex-girlfriend while she was out celebrating her birthday. Enraged that she was not answering his calls or text messages, he traveled from Hialeah Gardens to Perrine by bicycle. The Defendant waited until the Victim left

her home, and shot her in the head, killing her. No DNA nor fingerprints were recovered on the scene; however, the Defendant's cell sites placed him in the area when the murder occurred.

Over a year later, the Defendant was brought into the police department and eventually confessed to the murder.

The ASAs would like to thank, Trial Coordinator Jackie Sanchez and Homicide Counselors Idalma Gurruchaga and Kelly Usher-Villazan, for their dedication and assistance throughout the case.