



**Gabrielle Mucciola**  
**Monongalia County Prosecuting Attorney**  
**Monongalia County Justice Center**  
75 High Street  
Morgantown, WV 26505  
Main (304) 291-7250

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Monongalia County Prosecuting Attorney, Gabrielle Mucciola, announces the arrest of Tony Bethea in a thirty-one (31) year old Sexual Assault case. The investigation and subsequent arrest were made due to collaborative efforts between the West Virginia State Police and the West Virginia Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) team.

On March 7, 1993, a victim reported an incident of a Sexual Assault to the West Virginia State Police. No offender was charged based on the evidence available at the time. The evidence was then processed as part of the WV SAKI project and the suspected offender's DNA was entered into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS).

An association was made by the West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory which connected the suspect's DNA with a known DNA profile from Tony Bethea, 53, whose DNA profile had been entered into the West Virginia State DNA Database linking him to a prior WV Sex Offense.

Based on the DNA evidence and further investigation, West Virginia State Police Corporal Matt Sternart obtained four felony warrants for the offense(s) of 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Sexual Assault.

This case was part of the West Virginia Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI). Funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative aims to create a coordinated community response that ensures just resolution to sexual assault cases. Through this program, funding is provided to support multidisciplinary community response teams engaged in the comprehensive reform of jurisdictions approaches to sexual assault cases resulting from evidence found in previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits. Additional information on the program can be found at <https://www.sakitta.org/westvirginia/>.