

# DeKalb County District Attorney's Office Teams with Othram to Identify a 2018 John Doe

After 6 years, a man who died in Atlanta, Georgia, has been identified as 59-year-old **Steve Armstrong** of Jackson, Tennessee.

Solved



## Summary

In September 2018, a white male went into cardiac arrest while inside of a Wendy's restaurant that is connected to a Pilot Travel Center on Bouldercrest Road, southeast of downtown Atlanta, Georgia. Witnesses rushed to perform CPR as 911 was called. EMS arrived at the scene and transported the man to Atlanta Medical Center where attempts to save his life were unsuccessful. A nurse at the hospital reported the man's death to the Dekalb County Medical Examiner's Office, and reported that the man's name, date of birth, and age were unknown.

Although no identification was found on the man, his physical appearance was easily describable. Investigators measured his height at 6' 1", his weight as 190 pounds, and his age was estimated to be between 55 and 75 years. A few scars were found on his body; one excoriation directly over his right kneecap, and two around his left kneecap. The man was wearing brown cargo shorts with a black and brown belt along with white and navy sneakers. He also had gray and brown hair as

well as a beard and mustache, and an overall presence of body hair with hazel-colored eyes.



In October 2019, details of the case were entered into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) as UP61155. A forensic sketch depicting the man's likeness was developed and released to the public in hopes that it would generate new leads in the case. Despite extensive efforts by law enforcement investigators to identify the man, no matches were found, and the case went cold due to a lack of investigative leads.

In hopes that advanced DNA testing could help identify the man, the DeKalb County District Attorney's Office submitted forensic evidence to Othram in The Woodlands, Texas. Othram scientists successfully developed a DNA extract from the forensic evidence, and then used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® to build a comprehensive genealogical profile for the unknown man. Othram's in-house forensic genetic genealogy team then used this profile to conduct genetic genealogy research, ultimately providing new investigative leads to law enforcement.

Using this new information, a follow-up investigation was conducted leading investigators to potential relatives of the man. Reference DNA samples were collected from the potential relatives and compared to the DNA profile of the unknown man. This investigation led to the positive identification of the man, who is now known to be Steve Armstrong, 59, of Jackson, Tennessee.

A DNASolves crowdfund was created to raise funds for the casework costs, but the vast majority of the funding was provided by NamUs. NamUs is a national clearinghouse that assists the criminal justice community with the investigation and

resolution of missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons cases across the United States and its territories. NamUs is funded and administered by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and is managed through a contract with Research Triangle Institute International. We are grateful for the support of RTI, NamUs, and the NIJ.

The identification of Steve Armstrong represents the 20th case in the State of Georgia where officials have publicly identified an individual using technology developed by Othram. To learn more about other Georgia cases, visit [DNASolves](#).