

Detroit Police Department Teams with Othram to Identify a 2006 Homicide Victim

After nearly two decades, a murdered woman, whose remains were found on the east side of Detroit in 2006, is now identified as **Darylnn Washington**, born in 1959.

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Summary

In June 2006, the body of an unidentified woman was discovered in an abandoned house on the east side of Detroit, Michigan. It was determined that the remains were that of a Black female who was between the ages of 20 and 30 years. The woman's height was estimated to be 5'0" and no other identifying characteristics could be determined. It was estimated that the woman had died only days prior to the discovery of her remains and her manner of death was ruled as a homicide.

The woman, a confessed victim of Detroit serial killer Shelly Brooks, could not be identified and details of the case were entered into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) as UP7935. A forensic composite depicting how the woman may have looked during her life was developed and released to the public in hopes that it would assist with her identification. Despite the efforts of investigators, the woman could not be identified and the case was cold for nearly two decades.



In April 2022, the Detroit Police Department teamed with Othram to determine if advanced DNA testing and forensic genetic genealogy could help generate new leads and assist with identifying the unknown woman. Evidence was submitted to Othram's laboratory in The Woodlands, Texas. Othram scientists successfully developed a DNA extract from the forensic evidence and used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® to build a comprehensive DNA profile for the unknown woman. Othram's in-house forensic genetic genealogy team then used this profile to conduct genealogy research, ultimately providing new investigative leads to law enforcement.

Using these new leads, a follow-up investigation was launched leading to potential family members of the unidentified woman. This investigation led to the identification of Jane Doe, who is now known to be Darylnn Washington, who was born June 15, 1959. Darylnn's family was notified of her identification. Throughout the course of the investigation, investigators learned that Washington's family believed their loved one had been murdered by a serial killer, but her remains were never located.

Funding for the advanced DNA testing and forensic genetic genealogy used in this case was provided by NamUs, 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 Darylnn Washington represents the 9th case in the State of Michigan where officials have publicly announced the identification of an individual using technology developed by Othram. [Visit DNASolves](#) to learn about other Michigan cases.