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*****MEDIA ALERT*****

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**PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE ANNOUNCES FOUR JURY TRIAL
WINS IN ONE WEEK ON BEHALF OF THE STATE AGAINST
DOMESTIC ABUSERS**

Evansville, IN – Prosecutor Diana Moers announces that, during the week of June 12, 2023, the Vanderburgh County Prosecutor's Office successfully obtained guilty verdicts in four jury trials involving domestic violence. These tremendous successes herald a new, focused effort by the Prosecutor's Office toward prosecution of domestic violence cases, even if the victim is unable or unwilling to testify.

Leonardo Wade, Jr.

On August 17, 2022, during an argument, Wade put his arm around the victim's neck and started squeezing. The victim's throat started hurting and she struggled to breathe. The victim ran to a neighbor's apartment to call 911. Marks on both sides of the victim's neck were photographed.

The jury found Wade guilty of Domestic Battery, a Class A misdemeanor. Sentencing is set for July 17, 2023.

Shawn Tyler Miller

On December 30, 2022, Miller and the victim were in bed when he accused her of cheating on him. He grabbed the victim by the hair and the throat, slammed her against the headboard, punched her in the face leaving a cut on the lip, and then strangled and choked her until she was unable to breathe. The victim stated that Miller stopped the beating once her juvenile daughter entered the room, but took her phone and advised that he would burn the house down and kill her if she notified police. The victim then stated she was unable to leave her home for 24 hours until Miller went into another room and she fled the residence to her parents' house. Officers later went to the victim's residence

to rescue her daughter held captive by Miller, who had barricaded them in the garage. Miller eventually let the daughter exit the garage.

Before trial, Miller was forbidden to contact the victim but did so anyway, leading to the prosecution filing a motion for forfeiture by wrongdoing, which was granted. The prosecution then proceeded without the victim's testimony due to the intimidation by defendant.

The jury found Miller guilty of criminal confinement, a Level 6 felony; strangulation, a Level 6 felony; intimidation, a Level 6 felony; and domestic battery, a Class A misdemeanor. Sentencing is set for July 6, 2023.

Andrew William Sutton

On February 5, 2022, Sutton showed up to the victim's home and attempted to get inside. He drew a knife and put it against her stomach. The victim had to use her bodyweight to close the door to prevent Sutton from gaining entry. Sutton made threats that he would come back with a gun. Two days later, the two were in his home when Sutton took away the victim's phone, shoved her against the wall, threw her down on her back, and placed his hands over her nose and mouth. The victim could not breathe. Sutton threatened to kill her by mixing fentanyl into a liquid and making her drink it. The victim was unable to leave the home because Sutton would tackle her and physically prevent her from leaving. The victim had visible bruises on her knee, inner thigh, and ribs.

The jury found Sutton guilty of domestic battery, a Class A misdemeanor, which was enhanced to felony domestic batter, a Level 6 felony, due to a prior conviction for domestic battery. Sentencing is set for July 14, 2023.

Cory David Brown

The victim had a protective order against Brown, her ex-boyfriend. The victim allowed Brown back into her home because he told her he had stopped using drugs and wanted to work things out. Brown then became hostile and violent, forcing the victim to stand in a corner and throwing food and plates at her, choking her, holding a knife to her throat, stabbing her bed, pouring water over her, making her take off her clothes, threatening to put objects inside of her, and trashing her home, breaking cabinets and her refrigerator. The victim was not allowed to leave. This occurred over a period of several hours, all in the presence of the victim's juvenile children. The children later confirmed that what the victim said was true. The victim's injuries included cuts to her face and left ear.

The jury found Brown guilty of criminal confinement, a Level 6 felony; intimidation, a Level 6 felony; domestic battery in violation of a protective order, a Level 6 felony; domestic batter, a Level 6 felony; criminal mischief, a Class A misdemeanor; and interference with the reporting of a crime, a Class A misdemeanor. Sentencing is set for July 14, 2023.

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Prosecutor Moers congratulated her deputies, Amanda Honaker, Josh Hutcheson, and Jeremy Kemper, for vigorously pursuing justice for the victims and the community, notwithstanding absence of the victim's testimony in some cases.

“These results are due to the efforts of many and I thank my deputy prosecutors, law enforcement and victim advocates for their efforts,” said Prosecutor Moers, “We are employing every effort to bring justice to those who target the weak and vulnerable—including presenting the state’s case and evidence in the absence of the victim if necessary. Domestic violence cases are a volatile and disruptive case-type and notoriously place officers and children in harm’s way. We prosecute crimes on behalf of the state and will hold offenders accountable to keep peace in Vanderburgh County.”

Deputy prosecutor Amanda Honaker, who has taken the lead on many domestic violence cases, stated the following: “I want victims to know that, if your abuser is intimidating you, I will fight for you even if you’re scared. We need to put an end to abusers’ power and control before it is too late!”

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