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| **August 17, 2009** | **Kits are discovered** | A Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office (WCPO) Assistant Prosecuting Attorney discovers over 11,000 untested sexual assault kits (SAKs) during a tour of a Detroit Police Department (DPD) property storage room by representatives from WCPO and the Michigan State Police (MSP). |
| **October 2009 through March 2010** | **Project 400** | The WCPO worked with the Michigan Domestic Violence and Prevention and Treatment Board (MDVSAPTB) and other state and local partners to develop and fund a multi-disciplinary team to initiate a project to determine the scope of the problem and identify the resources necessary to address it. The WCPO, MSP, DPD, Michigan State University (MSU), the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan (PAAM), and the Wayne County Sexual Assault Forensic Exam program (WC-SAFE) all came together to develop an analysis and evaluation of 400 randomly selected SAKs, known as the Project 400. |
| **March 2011** | **Project 400 Results** | Testing the 400 SAKs results in 149 CODIS eligible profiles and 90 CODIS Associations. Some cases are found to have been previously adjudicated, some were beyond the statute of limitations, and some were able to go forward with prosecution. |
| **April 2011 through September 2013** | **Project 1600****The Detroit****SAK ARP Project** | The WCPO was one of only two jurisdictions in the country to receive funding from the National Institute of Justice for testing an additional 1,600 kits, developing model protocols for victim notification, and developing best practices for the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases.The WCPO formed collaborative partnerships with law enforcement, victim advocacy groups, social scientists, and forensic laboratories. This included the WCPO, MSP, MSU, DPD, MDVSAPTB, WC SAFE, PAAM, the YWCA Interim House; and the Joyful Heart Foundation (JHF). |
| **August 11, 2011** | **SAK Audit Completed** | The WCPO completed an audit of the SAKs discovered to be in Detroit Police custody. Over 11,000 SAKs are counted. |
| **May 2012** | **1st SAK Conviction** | Antonio Jackson is convicted of Criminal Sexual Conduct 1st Degree and Home Invasion 1st Degree after a jury trial. Mr. Jackson was identified as the rapist through Project 400. He was sentenced to 30 to 50 years in prison. |
| **June 2012** | **Victim Notification Review Team Formed** | With help from the Joyful Heart Foundation (JHF), the WCPO and collaborative partners attended a 2-day retreat where they developed an initial victim notification protocol. Throughout the SAKARP regular victim notification review team (VNRT) meetings were held to continue to improve the protocol to respect the rights of victims while ensuring community safety. |
| **June 2013** | **Project 8000** | Governor Rick Snyder, Prosecutor Kym Worthy, and Attorney General Bill Schuette announce that $4 million of funding obtained in an unrelated federal settlement would provide funding for MSP to outsource the analysis of 8000 of the SAKs. |
| **October 2013** | **GTEA Funds Awarded to Create SAK Unit** | The WCPO is awarded funding from the DOJ Office of Violence Against Women to create a cold case unit under the Grant to Encourage Arrest (GTEA). Funding is provided for two assistant prosecuting attorneys (APAs), a victim’s advocate, and an investigator. The Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office creates the Sexual Assault Kit Unit to investigate and prosecute cases arising from testing of the SAKs in Detroit. |
| **November 11, 2013****Through Present** | **DCC Becomes Fiduciary for Donations to Test SAKs** | The Detroit Crime Commission agrees to become the fiduciary agency to handle and process private donations to help cover the cost of testing SAKs in Detroit. |
| **December 2013** | **Project 8000 Testing Begins** | MSP begins outsourcing of approximately 8000 SAKs to two outside vendors. |
| **February 2014** | **Project 1600 testing completed** | Project 1600 testing is complete resulting in 455 CODIS associations. |
| **March 10, 2014** | **Mariska Hargitay joins in calling for legislation mandating SAK testing** | Mariska Hargitay, from NBC’s “Law & Order: Special Victims Unit,” and founder and president of the Joyful Heart Foundation (which advocates for rape victims) joined with Kym Worthy to call for legislation requiring that all SAKs be tested, unless the victim does not want it tested. |
| **June 2014** | **Michigan Legislature Approves $3 Million for Prosecution** | The Michigan Legislature approves a one-time $3 Million appropriation to help fund the investigation and prosecution of cases arising from the testing of previously untested SAKs in Detroit. A 3-year work and spending plan is later developed. |
| **June 26, 2014** | **Governor Snyder signs the Sexual Assault Kit Evidence Submission Act MCL 752.931-935** | Governor Rick Snyder signs the sexual assault kit evidence submission act. This legislation requires that every SAK ‘released’ by a victim to be tested, be tested. It also establishes time requirements for health care professionals (14 days), law enforcement (14 days) and forensic laboratories (90 days) to process a SAK. |
| **July 2014****Through Present** | **WCPO Joins MWF and DCC** | The WCPO initiated a partnership with the community non-profit organizations the Michigan Women’s Foundation (MWF) and the Detroit Crime Commission (DCC) to develop a comprehensive campaign to raise awareness and funds for testing and investigation. Funds collected are used to test SAKs from Detroit and other police agencies in Wayne County; the DCC negotiating a lower SAK processing cost from existing vendors. |
| **October 2014** | **2014 SAK Summit Cleveland** | The WCPO joined the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office (Cleveland, OH) and the Memphis, TN Mayor’s Office to participate in a summit to identify best practices, develop a model approach, and identify the best way to leverage limited resources to address rape kit backlogs. |
| **October 14, 2014** | **Governor Snyder signs the Sexual Assault Evidence Kit Tracking and Reporting act****MCL 752.961-962** | This legislation became effective on January 1, 2015 and created a 15-member multidisciplinary commission within the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board (MDSVPTB). The commission is charged with developing a plan for a statewide tracking system of SAKs, auditing proper submission of current kits under MCL 752.931-935, and auditing untested SAKs released by the victim before March 2015. They are also charged with the developing a plan for secure electronic access for victims to receive information about the SAKs collected in their cases. |
| **October 14, 2014** | **Governor Snyder signs the Sexual Assault Victim's Access to Justice Act****MCL 752.951-957** | This legislation became effective on April 1, 2015. It requires that law enforcement give certain information and notices to all sexual assault victims. It contains specific provisions about providing information about SAK testing. |
| **November 2014** | **UPS SAK Tracking Project** | The WCPO announces a partnership with UPS, DPD, MSP, WC SAFE and the DCC to develop a pilot tracking system of SAKs collected in Detroit. |
| **December 2014** | **Work Group Becomes WCSAKTF** | Existing work group consisting of the WCPO SAK Unit, WCSAFE, and the DPD Sex Crimes Cold Case Unit is renamed the Wayne County Sexual Assault Task Force (WCSAKTF). |
| **January 6, 2015** | **Detroit Enough SAID Initiative Announced** | The WCPO, the MWF, and the DCC announce a unique public-private partnership to help fund the investigation and prosecution of cases arising from testing of the previously untested SAKs in Detroit. The MWF Enough SAID (Sexual Assault In Detroit) Initiative will allow for expansion of the WCSAKTF by providing funding for personnel and equipment through grants administered by the DCC. |
| **February 2015 through March 2015** | **WCSAKTF Cold Case Sexual Assault Investigation Protocol** | The WCPO developed an evidence-based cold case investigative protocol based on the findings from the Detroit SAK ARP (Project 1600). The victim centered, offender focused, and trauma informed protocol includes the victim notification process developed as part of the ARP. The protocol is continually amended based on input from law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim’s rights groups to reflect best practices. |
| **March 1, 2015** | **Detroit SAK ARP****(Project 1600)****Final Report Published** | The final report of the Detroit SAK ARP is submitted. It summarizes the findings of the multidisciplinary collaborative group. It includes a model victim notification policy, reasons SAKs were not tested in Detroit, and suggestions for policy makers. 127 Suspected Serial Offenders are identified through testing of the approximately 1600 SAKs. |
| **March 9, 2015** | **DOJ, OJP, BJA SAKI Grant and SAKI/TTA Grant****Solicitations****Released** | The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), U.S. Office of Justice Programs (OJP), and the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) release the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) and the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Training and Technical Assistance Grant (SAKI/TTA) grant solicitations. Both cite the Detroit SAK ARP as a basis for the national BJA model for handling untested SAKs. |
| **May 2015** | **MDAG and MSP Join WCSAKTF** | Prosecutor Kym Worthy, MSP, DPD, and Attorney General Bill Schuette finalize a work and spending plan for the $3 million appropriated by the Michigan legislature. The plan expands the existing WCSAKTF to include the MDAG and MSP as task force agencies. It also includes funding for personnel, equipment, and investigative expenses. |
| **July 2015** | **WCPO Awarded Enough SAID****Grant** | The MWF, through the DCC, awards a grant to the WCPO that provides salary and equipment costs for 5 contract WCPO Detectives. |
| **August 25, 2015** | **MSP reports that Project 800 testing is complete** | The Michigan State Police report that Project 8000 testing is complete. The testing resulted in resulting in 2,004 CODIS associations. For all three projects, MSP reports a total of 2,616 CODIS associations |
| **September 2015** | **WCPO Awarded SAKI Grant** | Detroit (and the WCPO) is one of 12 cities in the United States selected as a grant recipient for the SAKI Grant. The Grant will provide funding for case management software, prosecutors, investigators, and a victim advocate position. Two of the remaining grantees are also from Michigan. |
| **October 2015** | **Memphis SAK Summit** | The WCPO joined the Memphis, TN Mayor’s Office, and the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office (Cleveland, OH) to participate in a summit to identify best practices, develop a model approach, and identify the best way to leverage limited resources to address rape kit backlogs. |
| **October 20, 2015** | **Detroit SAK SUMMIT Announced** | WCPO Kym Worthy announces that Detroit will host a SAK summit to identify best practices, develop a model approach, and identify the best way to leverage limited resources to address rape kit backlogs in 2016. |
| **November 2015** | **Wayne County Executive Provides****WCSAKTF Task Force Location** | Wayne County Executive Warren Evans pledges his support for the WCSAKTF by providing office space in the Guardian building in Detroit for the WCSAKTF. He also pledges additional funding of 1 million dollars for the project which is pending County Commission approval. |
| **April 2016** | **Completed DPD “B Kit’ Audit** | The WCSAKTF completed an initial review of cases previously submitted to the DPD crime lab (so called ‘B kits’) after receiving electronic versions of DPD lab reports from 1989 to 2009. |
| **May to August 2016** | **529 Detroit SAKS submitted for testing using SAKI/DANY funds** | The PAAM SAKI program, the Detroit Police and the WCPO certified and processed 529 SAKs from Detroit Police for testing under the 2015 SAKI/DANY grants. This is in addition to SAKs submitted throughout the state of Michigan using SAKI and DANY funds. |
| **September 2016** | **‘Project 8000’ Spending Plan is Extended** | The 3-year work and spending plan is extended another fiscal year and amended to include funding for a community-based victim advocate with WCSAFE |
| **September 25-28,****2016** | **2016 Detroit SAK Summit** | Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy hosted a National Summit for Communities addressing previously untested sexual assault evidence kits and subsequent cold case investigations. Over 300 attendees participated, representing communities in over 20 states and the District of Columbia. |
| **October 2016** | **WCPO Awarded GTEA Continuation Grant** | The WCPO is awarded funding from the DOJ Office of Violence Against Women to extend funding under the Grant to Encourage Arrest (GTEA). Funding is provided for two assistant prosecuting attorneys (APAs), a victim’s advocate, an investigator, and a WCSAFE community-based advocate. |
| **November 2016** | **WCSAKTF Trauma Informed Forensic Interview Protocol** | The WCPO developed a trauma informed forensic interview protocol for adult victims of sexual assault. It is based on work developed by Mich. Gov. Task Force on Child Abuse & Neglect, DHHS, PAAM CATS, Dr. Debra Poole, MCOLES, MDSVPTB, OVW, Russel Strand, Dr. Rebecca Campbell, and Dr. David Lisak |
| **February 2017** | **Community Engagement Award** | Prosecutor Kym Worthy and Dr. Rebecca Campbell were honored by Michigan State University with Community Engagement Award. |
| **May 2017** | **2nd Annual SAKI Grantee’s Meeting** | WCSAKTF members presented at the Annual SAKI Grantees’ Meeting in Washington D.C. |
| **August 2017** | **SAKI TTA** | WCSAKTF members participated in a national Cold Case Sexual Assault Investigation and Prosecution in Washington D.C. |
| **April 9, 2018** | **I Am Evidence** | New York HBO Premiere of I Am Evidence. |
| **April 14-15, 2018** | **I Am Evidence** | Detroit HBO Premiere of I Am Evidence. |
| **July 2018** | **TED Talks** | Kym Worthy participated in a TED Talks: What happened when we tested thousands of abandoned rape kits in Detroit. |
| **September 11-13, 2018** | **2018 Duluth Assembly of Cities** | Members of the WCSAKTF joined the Duluth Site and participated in a summit to identify best practices, develop a model approach, and identify the best way to leverage limited resources to address rape kit backlogs.Task Force members facilitated discussion panels at this event. |
| **September 2017** | **2017 SAKI Awarded** | WCSAKTF awarded funds under the 2017 SAKI solicitation. WCSAKTF will seek additional funds under the 2018 SAKI solicitation. |
| **October 2018** | **2018 SAKI Solicitation** | WCSAKTF awarded funds under the 2018 SAKI solicitation. |
| **January 2019** | **Forensic Genealogy Testing** | The WCSAKTF submitted the first SAK for testing to Parabon for forensic genealogy testing with funding from MWF. |
| **February 2019** | **Cold Case Sexual Assault Investigation Training** | The WCSAKTF provided Cold Case Sexual Assault Training Investigation training to 45 local police agencies within Wayne County. |
| **May 2019** | **Michigan Certified for Best Practices** | Michigan certified for 'best practices' in rape kit testing by Joyful Heart Foundation. |
| **June 2019** | **WCSAKTF Partnered with First Step** | The WCSAKTF partnered with First Step to provide community-based services to SAKs tested under SAKI/DANI funds (out county kits). |
| **June 2019** | **4TH Annual SAKI Grantee’s Meeting** | WCSAKTF members presented at the Annual SAKI Grantees’ Meeting in Washington D.C. |
| **August 14, 2019** | **10th****Anniversary****Commemoration** | The WCSAKTF commemorates the 10th year anniversary of the kits being discovered. |
| **September 2019** | **2019 SAKI Solicitation** | WCSAKTF awarded funds under the 2019 SAKI solicitation. |
| **September 2019** | **200th Conviction** | In September 2019 WCSAKTF secured the 200th conviction of the former untested rape kit cases |
| **October 2019** | **GTEA Grant****Extended** | The DOJ Office of Violence Against Women to extend funding under the Grant to Encourage Arrest (GTEA). |
| **November 13-14, 2019** | **2019 Jacksonville****Assembly of Cities** | Members of the WCSAKTF joined the Jacksonville Site and participated in a summit to identify best practices, develop a model approach, and identify the best way to leverage limited resources to address rape kit backlogs.Task Force members facilitated discussion panels at this event. |
| **February 21, 2020** | **Wayne County Commission approved MOU with AG’s office** | The Wayne County Commissioners approved a Memorandum of Understanding between the WCPO and Attorney General’s office to fund additional positions within the WCSAKTF |
| **March 13, 2020** | **COVID-19 Pandemic forces furlough** | All court proceedings were halted and eventually a virtual platform was utilized for court hearings; administrative releases in lieu of bond were granted to release inmates awaiting trial |
| **May 18, 2020** | **WCSAKTF meeting to modify protocol** | In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, WCPO SAK team and community partners met virtually to discuss options for victim notifications during the pandemic |
| **June 19, 2020** | **SAKI awards Advanced DNA grant** | The BJA/SAKI TTA group awarded the WCSAKTF $50,000 to fund advanced DNA testing for other violent cold cases |
| **August 20, 2020** | **Parabon finds genetic genealogy match** | The WCSAKTF was notified by Parabon Nanolabs that they found a genetic genealogy match for the unknown serial offender DNA that had been submitted in 2019. The match leads to a family tree that pinpoints 5 related individuals as possible suspects |
| **September 16-18, 2020** | **5th Annual National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Grantees Meeting** | Members of the WCSAKTF virtually attend the annual grantees meeting. Detectives Ken Muscat and Mark Farrah present a case study based upon the Cortez Hill cases |
| **October 1, 2020** | **SAKI 20 grant awarded** | The WCSAKTF was notified they were awarded the SAKI 20 grant in the amount of $999,755 to cover 10/1/20-9/30/23 |
| **October 7, 2020** | **WCSAKTF hosts regional SAKI meeting** | WCSAKTF virtually hosted the quarterly Michigan Regional SAKI meeting with SAKI units from Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Jackson, Ingham and Washtenaw counties, and the AG’s office in attendance. |
| **March 25, 2021** | **WCSAKTF MDT convenes to review Victim Notification Protocol** | WCSAKTF members gathered in person for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic to discuss Victim notification protocol for Non-CODIS Hit cases, Genetic Genealogy initiatives, as well as review investigations/prosecution statistics to date |
| April 12, 2021 | **WCSAKTF presents at Sexual Assault Evidence Kit Tracking and Reporting Commission** | WCSAKTF presents project update including overall project statistics to date, Genetic Genealogy initiative, and Opt-In line project update |
| May 2021 | **WCSAKTF partners with DPD task force to surveil and obtain discarded DNA** | WCSAKTF and DPD partner to conduct surveillance and collect discarded DNA from lead suspects generated by Parabon NanoLabs for unknown serial offender using Genetic Genealogy |
| July 2021 | **Charges and arrest of first defendant ID’d using Forensic Genetic Genealogy** | On July 21, 2022 charges were authorized against Lionel Wells the first defendant identified using Forensic Genetic Genealogy. Wells was arrested 5 days later |
| September 2021 | **Additional charges filed against serial offender Lionel Wells** | In September 2021 two additional cases were charged against serial offender Lionel Wells identified using Forensic Genetic Genealogy |
| November 2021 | **Final charges filed against serial offender Lionel Wells** | In November 2021 two additional cases were charged against serial offender Lionel Wells identified using Forensic Genetic Genealogy. Wells’ DNA was present in 6 rape kits for assaults occurring between 2007 and 2014 |
| January 2022 | **SAKI21 Grant Award** | WCSAKTF was awarded an additional $1,000,000 under the SAKI21 grant. This 3 year award supports current personnel investigating the original 2009 kits and expands use of WCSAKTF Victim Notification Protocol to CODIS hit cases from 2009-2015 |
| January 2022 | **Charges filed on second defendant identified with FGG** | Two cases were filed against the second serial offender identified using Forensic Genetic Genealogy for sexual assaults occurring in 1996 and 2001 |
| July 2022 | **Opt-In Line Proposal Approved** | WCSAKTF receives approval from County to pursue professional services for ad campaign to promote Opt-In line for Survivors to obtain rape kit test results, referrals for services, and provide information for investigations. Private donation funding to be utilized to fund campaign |
| August 2022 | **First Convictions for FGG cases** | Defendant Lionel Wells, serial offender identified utilizing Forensic Genetic Genealogy, pleads guilty to charges of CSC 1st Degree for 5 separate rape kit cases |
| September 2022 | **First Defendant Identified using Forensic Genetic Genealogy Sentenced** | On September 14, 2022, Lionel Wells was sentenced to 25-50 years in the Michigan Department of Corrections to be followed by lifetime registration and electronic monitoring for 5 sexual assaults occurring from 2007 to 2014 |
| November 2022 | **11,000 to Zero (Opt-In) Campaign launches** | On November 17, 2022 the Detroit Rape Kit Information Line and MyRapeKit.com website go live to allow survivors the opportunity to contact WCSAKTF to obtain DNA test results for former untested rape kits discovered in 2009*Rape Kit Info Line and MyRapeKit.com website are funded from private donations. and administrated by the Detroit Crime Commission.* |