

the PROSECUTOR'S POST

SUMMER 2025

SUMMIT COUNTY, OH

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Elliot Kolkovich
Summit County Prosecutor

A NOTE FROM THE PROSECUTOR



According to AARP, in 2024 fraud and scams cost Americans \$47 billion. There are millions of survivors of financial crime; but scam survivors often don't talk about their experience due to the stress, anxiety, trauma, and even embarrassment over what happened to them.

Even being the Prosecutor doesn't keep me safe from being targeted by scammers.

A few weekends ago, I travelled to Washington, D.C. with my family. Almost immediately upon our return to Ohio, I started getting texts about missed toll bills I needed to pay. I also started getting texts about parking tickets in another out-of-state town I had recently visited to see family.

Because the texts made sense in the context of my recent travels, I was worried they might have some merit. But rather than clicking any links sent to me or contacting the number I was contacted by, I found trusted contact information for the organizations that these texts would have come from—if they were legitimate. After reaching out to the alleged sources directly, I found out that both series of texts were merely scams.

The timing and specificity was panic-inducing—which is exactly what scammers want. They want you to feel pressure to take immediate action before investigating further, clicking the link they sent or prompting you to provide your personal information so they can gain access to your bank account.

Scammers do a lot of research and use advanced technology to create convincing and targeted scams. Your reaction to any text or call from an unfamiliar source should always be to GET more information—never to give it. Always verify the source before trusting it.

Keep trusted, known numbers of your banks, government agencies, and other businesses you frequent so you know who to reach out to if you receive a concerning call or text. It's the best defense against scams.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Kolkovich', written in a cursive style.



UNPAID TOLL BILLS

Many Ohioans have been receiving texts asserting they have “unpaid toll bills.” Do NOT click on any links in these texts. Ohio Turnpike officials have issued the following guidance:

- Phone numbers appear to be randomly chosen and do not have to be associated with toll road use.
- Ohio Turnpike E-ZPass does not request payments by text. Collections of unpaid tolls and/or toll violations do not occur by text.
- All links associated with Ohio Turnpike E-ZPass will include www.ezpassoh.com and www.ohioturnpike.org.
- If you’re concerned, call the Ohio Turnpike’s E-ZPass customer service center directly at (440) 971-2222.

OHIO BMV OUTSTANDING TRAFFIC TICKETS

Ohio residents have reported receiving text messages from scammers claiming to be from the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles and informing the recipients that they have an outstanding traffic ticket. The text then instructs the recipient to pay immediately to avoid a license suspension. This particular scam is a phishing attempt that is being reported by drivers nationwide and is designed to trick residents into giving up personal or financial information.

Ohio BMV Registrar Charlie Norman has stated that “Ohio BMV will never send you a text message demanding payment or requesting your personal information.”

RESOURCES FOR SCAM SURVIVORS

- Ohioans can report scam attempts to the Federal Trade Commission by visiting reportfraud.ftc.gov.
- Visit the Better Business Bureau’s online [Scam Tracker](#) to check their database of known existing scams, or to report a new one.
- If you believe you have been a victim of a scam, please contact your local police department. The Better Business Bureau also has an online [Scam Survivor Kit](#) that can help guide you through resources.



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BUILD

In May, numerous members of our office volunteered to work on two homes at the Habitat for Humanity of Summit County Silver Maple Ridge development site. It was a great day of work to help support affordable home ownership and community in Summit County.

JUNETEENTH



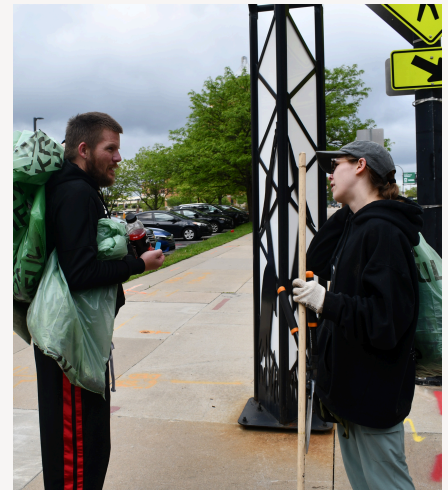
The Prosecutor's office had a great time celebrating with the community at Akron's Juneteenth celebration! Juneteenth is a day to commemorate the ending of slavery in the United States.

OPEN M LUNCH



Many of our staff members volunteered to provide and serve a free hot lunch at Open M ministries in Akron, and to pack food bags for the food pantry. It was great to connect with community and help fight hunger in Summit County.

SPRING CLEAN



In May, we supported Summit County Turning Point Program's Spring Clean event with Keep Akron Beautiful! We joined them to help pick up trash, pull weeds, and clean up and refresh parts of downtown Akron.



PROMOTING PERSONAL SAFETY

From senior safety speeches, to self-defense classes for women, to concealed carry workshops, Prosecutor Kolkovich continues working to promote personal and public safety throughout Summit County by providing free education and resources for residents that can help them protect themselves.

CCW WORKSHOP



We joined the Summit County Sheriff's Office for another concealed carry workshop in Akron. These workshops provide information on Ohio's concealed carry laws, and give residents the opportunity to ask questions and learn how to carry their handguns legally and safely.

WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENSE CLASSES



Our monthly free self-defense classes for women continued in Copley in May, and in Stow in June. These classes provide women with the space to learn and to practice verbal and physical techniques to keep them safe. We'll be taking a break in July, but be sure to join us for our next class in August!

SENIOR SAFETY SPEECHES



Prosecutor Kolkovich continues to meet senior groups throughout Summit County, presenting on techniques and resources to help prevent them from becoming victims of scams and fraud.

EVENTS FOR SENIORS

Seniors and Caregivers Expo

August 6, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

550 S. Arlington St., Akron 44306

Senior Safety Speech

August 19 at 3 p.m.

200 Laurel Lake Dr., Hudson 44236

City of Green Senior Expo

September 4, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

4350 Mayfair Rd., Uniontown 44685

Senior Safari at the Zoo

September 5, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Akron Zoo

Macedonia Seniors & Caregivers Expo

September 17, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

1566 E. Aurora Rd., Macedonia 44056

Senior Safety Speech

September 24 at 11 a.m.

9691 Valley View Drive, Lower Level, Macedonia
44056

Senior Day at the International Soap Box Derby

September 26, Time TBD

1000 George Washington Blvd., Akron 44312



**Interested in hosting a safety
speech in your community?
Call (330) 643-2800**



Upcoming Events

SUMMER 2025

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

Do you have child support concerns? Come see CSEA out in the community for assistance with general questions, DNA testing, job assistance, license reinstatements, and more.

West Akron 5K

August 2, 8 a.m.–11 a.m.

1040 Copley Rd., Akron 44320

Citizen's Circle

August 14, 12:30 p.m.–4 p.m.

798 Grant St., Akron 44311

Citizen's Circle

September 11, 12:30 p.m.–4 p.m.

798 Grant St., Akron 44311

Tallmadge Circle Festival

August 9, 5 p.m.–11 p.m.

Tallmadge Circle Park

"Justice Bus" Free Legal Clinic

August 15, 10:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Twinsburg Public Library

If you have any questions regarding CSEA Events, please contact:

Travis Johnson (330) 643-8468

James Brewer (330) 643-8703

OTHER EVENTS

Juvenile Expungement Clinic

July 12, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Summit County Juvenile Court
650 Dan St., Akron 44310

African American

Cultural Festival

July 19, 1 p.m.–9 p.m. &

July 20, 1 p.m.–6 p.m.

Lock 3, Akron 44310

Open M Community Cookout

July 24, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

941 Princeton St., Akron 44311

Summit County Fair

July 22–27

Summit County Fairgrounds

Copley Heritage Day

August 2, 9:30 a.m.–7 p.m.

3232 Copley Rd., Copley 44321

National Night Out

August 5, 4 p.m.–8 p.m.

Throughout Summit County!

Touch-A-Truck

August 7, 5:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m.

1494 E. Aurora Rd., Macedonia
44056

Main Street Barberton

Heroes and Helpers

August 9, 12 p.m.–4 p.m.

Downtown Barberton Purple Lot
2nd St. NW & Tuscarawas St., 44203

Women's Self-Defense Class

August 26, 6 p.m.–8 p.m.

City of Joy Life Enrichment
Center

610 W. Exchange St., Akron

44302

Akron Latin Festival

September 9, 4 p.m.–9 p.m.

Lock 3, Akron 44310

Open M Free Lunch

September 25, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

941 Princeton St., Akron 44311



NEWS FROM OUR FACILITY DOG

It sure has been hot outside, but I've heard that summer is when the "dog days" are, so I'm excited for those! One of the things I've been doing this month is helping people learn tips on how to keep their pets cool during these hot days.

This last month, I've sat in a few trials with witnesses while they testify. Even if I just get to lay at their feet in the witness box, it means a lot to me that I get to be with them and support them while they testify. One of the prosecutors even let me work at his desk with him. I feel so lucky that I get to meet and support so many amazing people every day!

I'm really excited for the Fourth of July because that's the 50th anniversary of Canine Companions, my friends who helped me get trained as a puppy so that I can do the job I have now! It's really special getting to be a working dog and help people in my community.



TOP COP: Lieutenant Matthew Whitmire Akron Police Department



Lieutenant Matthew Whitmire was nominated by Assistant Prosecutors Rimma Avanesyan, Jovana Ilic, and Charles Roman. Lieutenant Whitmire took over a case where a victim had to spend multiple days in the hospital after being assaulted by three individuals. Lieutenant Whitmire's diligent investigative work and follow-up in this case, as well as his professional testimony, were crucial to the indictments, and ultimately the convictions, of all three co-defendants.

On any case he works, Lieutenant Whitmire always completes any follow-up that is needed. He cares about each and every one of his cases, and continues to investigate even after a suspect has been charged or indicted. His persistent work on cases even after an arrest has been made has been critical in promoting and serving justice in Summit County.

TOP COP: Detective Joseph Smith Akron Police Department



Detective Joseph Smith was nominated by Assistant Prosecutors Rimma Avanesyan and Kevin Day for his exceptional work on a complicated felonious assault case. In the case, the defendant was unlawfully residing in a condemned house, and shot and injured a contractor who had been hired by the city to secure the building.

As the lead detective on the case, Detective Smith displayed professionalism, persistence, and attention to detail. He conducted witness interviews, pursued leads, submitted physical evidence to the Bureau of Criminal Investigation for analysis, and carefully reviewed all aspects of the case. Throughout the process, Detective Smith remained accessible and engaged, attended meetings with prosecutors, and providing continued support throughout trial preparation and the trial itself. His commitment to thoroughness and justice reflects the highest standard of law enforcement.

SUCCESSFUL TRIAL PROSECUTIONS

Congratulations to the following assistant prosecutors who obtained convictions at trial during May and June:

RIMMA AVANESYAN

JAMILA MITCHELL

BEN CARRO

GREGORY PEACOCK

KEVIN DAY

CHARLES ROMAN (2)

JOVANA ILIC

JEREMY VEILETTE (2)

ZACHARY NEUMANN

EMILY WILLIAMS



New SCPO Staff

SUMMER 2025

We are excited to welcome these folks to the Summit County Prosecutor's Office!



Kim Sweeney
Child Support Specialist



Tierra Brown
Child Support Specialist



Megan Fuller
Child Support Specialist



Mia Montes Torres
Child Support Specialist



Vanthalith Ellsworth
Child Support Specialist



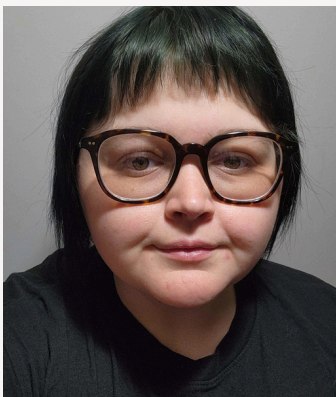
Sherri Carlson
Child Support Specialist



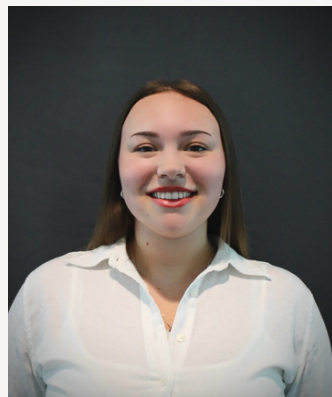
Oliva Spano
Clerical Specialist



Lisa Lee
Child Support Specialist



Sarah Kosinski
Clerical Specialist



Ava King
Child Support
Personnel Aide



Harrison Sorm
Assistant Prosecutor
Criminal Division



Larry Lane
Direct Indictment
Officer

Ambassadors for Equity and Social Justice

SUMMER 2025

CELEBRATING FREEDOM, WARMTH, AND COMMUNITY IN SUMMIT COUNTY



Independence Day: More Than Fireworks

Each year on July 4th, we celebrate our country's declaration of independence in 1776. The Declaration of Independence called for a new nation built on the idea that everyone has rights no one can take away.

But throughout history, not everyone has had an equal chance to enjoy those rights. For many people today, it's still a struggle to feel fully free and protected. That's why Independence Day can also be a time to ask honest questions: Who still feels left out? What can we do to make sure more people feel safe, heard, and treated fairly?

While national leaders continue to focus on strengthening civil rights and expanding access to opportunity, real progress also starts locally—with everyday people, neighborhoods, and communities coming together.

"The Declaration of Independence was not a statement of how things were, but a promise of what they could become."

— Marian Wright Edelman

A Summer of Warmth, Strength, and Growth

Summer is a season of long days, warm nights, and time outdoors with family and neighbors. That warmth isn't just in the air—it represents the strength we find in community, the care we show one another, and the energy we bring to making things better. When we support one another, show up for our neighbors, and work side-by-side, we create the kind of community where everyone can feel like they belong.

Ambassadors for Equity and Social Justice

SUMMER 2025

CELEBRATING FREEDOM, WARMTH, AND COMMUNITY IN SUMMIT COUNTY

Local Efforts Making a Difference

Across Summit County, these local initiatives offer ways to get involved or seek support—right in your own neighborhood:

Youth Programs and Mentorship:

Organizations like Project Ujima and the Youth Excellence Performing Arts Workshop (YEPAW) provide mentorship, life skills, and leadership opportunities to young people across Akron. These programs help guide youth toward positive paths through community support, arts, and enrichment.

Restorative Conversations:

The Rising Hope Initiative and groups like the Akron Peacemakers facilitate honest, respectful dialogue aimed at healing divisions, addressing community concerns, and building trust—especially among youth and law enforcement.

Neighborhood Projects:

Initiatives like Keep Akron Beautiful organize park and street clean-ups throughout the summer. The Akron Urban League and Let's Vote Summit also host community outreach efforts, including voter education, back-to-school drives, and neighborhood revitalization projects.

A Stronger Community for Everyone

Being proud of our country means more than waving a flag. It means doing our part to help it live up to its founding values. This July let's celebrate not just our independence, but our ability to come together, respect one another, and work toward a future where everyone has a fair shot.

As we enjoy the warmth of the season, may it also inspire us to be generous, hopeful, and active in our communities—not just for today, but for the generations still to come.

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

— Helen Keller

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office's Ambassadors for Equity and Social Justice bring together coworkers from different backgrounds and cultures, and foster education and engagement to make the community a better place.





Visit our website and connect with us on social media! Scan the QR code below:

