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June 24, 2019

To The Citizens of Suffolk  
Suffolk News Herald  
130 S. Saratoga Street  
Suffolk, VA 23434

Re: Letter to the Editor

I am writing regarding the Suffolk Commonwealth's Attorney's Office's recent 8<sup>th</sup> annual Forensics Camp. The office provided the FREE Forensics Camp for Suffolk students, ages 12-15 during the month of June. The Camp was very successful, graduating a total of 52 students.

The students were divided into 5 teams that worked mock crime scenes collecting evidence and gave reports at the closing Graduation ceremony. The Forensics Camp taught the students about observation, photography, evidence collection, preservation and testimony in court. The curriculum was designed to educate students about the study of forensics through criminal law. The Forensics Camp educated the students on the specific evidence needed by the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office and how to properly collect evidence to successfully prosecute cases. The students became increasingly aware and understood the realities of criminal cases through forensics.

I would like to thank Joan Turner, this office's Community Outreach Coordinator, for her dedication and outstanding work in organizing and implementing this camp. Joan was 1 of 5 instructors, leading a team of 10 students during the camp.

I would also like to thank Investigator John J. Marx, Sr., who is an investigator in this office and has over 43 years of law enforcement experience. John was an instructor for the CSI Camp, leading a team of 10 students during the camp.

In addition, I would like to thank Deputy Commonwealth's Attorneys Thomas G. Shaia and Vaughn T. Breedlove, and Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney, Carmen T. Cabrero for their participation and dedication to this camp and these students. They explained to the students how this evidence that was collected was used to successfully prosecute cases.

The Forensics Camp was enriched by strong partnerships with the Suffolk Sheriff's Office and the Suffolk Police Department. I would like to thank Sheriff E.C. Harris and Suffolk Police Chief Thomas E. Bennett for their support in providing staff to assist with this camp.

Deputy Sheriffs Debbie Callis and Andre Weaver were instructors in the Forensics Camp, leading teams with a total of 22 students. Stephanie Durbin, Forensic Technician with the Suffolk Police Department was an instructor for the CSI Camp, leading a team of 10 students. I would like to thank each of these instructors for their support and expertise.

Finally, I would like to thank Chick-fil-a, Subway and Little Caesars Pizza for their donations for the Graduation reception. Our community is indeed fortunate to have such willing and charitable business partners.

We expect to continue having this camp annually in June, following the end of the school year and encourage parents and guardians to enroll their children in this camp.

Sincerely Yours,

C. Phillips Ferguson  
Commonwealth's Attorney