

The City of Brotherly Love



Brooke Anderson

William's Vision

Centuries ago, a man by the name of William Penn, began the development of Pennsylvania and most importantly, Philadelphia. Even though Penn stuck to his strict Quaker religious views that backed most of his developments, he was pretty progressive in regards to relations with the Natives of the Land and opinions on how Philadelphia, his newly acquired land, should be.

Unlike various other colonizers, due to his pacifist nature, he didn't want bloodshed or war with the Natives. Instead, he believed strongly that they should be treated fairly and with respect. Penn saw the pain brought upon the Quakers when they were chased out of Britain, where he was jailed numerous times for his beliefs, and didn't want to be the cause of other's pain and short-changing. He traveled all throughout the colony to make sure that he had befriended and learned the language of the different tribes. Also, he insisted that the Natives of the land be paid a fair price for any land that Penn obtained from them. As for Penn's ancestors, they weren't as kind and respectful and drove them off the land and tended to break treaties after their founder's death.

Soon after Penn developed Philadelphia, he coined the nickname for it, "The City of Brotherly Love." The name Philadelphia is derived from Ancient Greek words which mean beloved and brotherly. He chose the combination of words to be his city's name hoping for a land of a heaven-like nature through street grids, religious beliefs, and much more. However, the name feels filled more with irony than hope. In today's world the phrase is filled with sarcasm thanks to the hostility, hatred, and "beef" with thy neighbors.

Penn's presence still remains and it's not just in the remaining grid-system. In 1894, he gained overview of his city by sitting atop city hall. After this placement, a local legend was instilled among residents that no building should stand taller than that of William Penn Statue atop City Hall. Nearly 90 years later, the architects of One Liberty Place built a skyscraper that stood much taller than William Penn. Most believe this is a sports superstition, but could it be the cause of the downfall of Philadelphia's lives? Penn's vision of his city is far from what he could have wished for or even compromised for with the violence and hatred of its own residence and its leaders not wishing to seek understanding its people in a respectful way. Is this Penn's punishment from above?



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Shua Butts, age 28; Kadeem Green, age 16; Morgan Braxton, age 25; Tarik Khalil Hooks II, age 21; Tamara Aikens, age 50; Wilfredo Couvertier, age 43; Jamal Jackson, age mid-20s, Jhalil Shands, age 25; Maria Rosado, age 33; Dianna Brice, age 21; Rayson Adams, age 29; Emiliano Montero, age 23; Anthony Merriett, age 55; Dominic Billa, age 21; Juan Muniz, age 30; Harley Delance, age 11; Justin Porter, age 18; Julius Anthony Chandler, age 32; **Thalyl Taylor, age 17**; Jahyde Gardiner, age 26; Damion Curtis, age 39; Rodney Hargrove, age 20; Clyde James, age 31; Daniel Robinson, age 33; Marcus Dixon, age 30; Micah Wyatt, age 25; Charles “Chuckie” Maude, age 24; Kahree Simmons, age 16; Antonio Walker Jr., age 15; Kahlief Myrick, age 16; Delant Johnson, age 48; Richard Weldon, age 23; Christine Gibson, age 54; Darius Winters, age 15; Jehesel Garcia, age 24; Maurice D Harper, age 42; Steven Williams, age 24; Thomas Burnett, age 61; Christopher Williams, age 33; Shakia M. Allen, age 35; Luca Hooker, age 20; Tajzee H. Branch-Berry, age 26; Kevin “Moodah” Davis Jr., age 18; Mark Ruff, age 50; Wahseem Mason, age 15; Lejan Jenkins, age 19; Saleem West, age 16; Elijah Dobbs-Harvey, age 18; Hugh Certaine, age 27; Ebony Pack, age 30; Raheem Myer, age 30; Albert Lee Jr, age 27; Nicole Newell, age 42; **Thomas Page, age 19**; Gladys Coriano, age 52; Nyssa Irene Davis, age 18; David “Teddy” Oliver, age 48; Milan Loncar, age 25; Christopher Williams, age 50; Kevin “Short Order” Smith, age 50; Rudolph C. Binger III, age 37; Ebony Kitchen, age 24; Frank T. Smith, age 21; Terrance Stewart, age 35; Marcus Alexander, age 26; Desiree Shaffer, age 37; Anthony Dixon, age 29; Juawann Mason, age 27; Jasmine Lewis, age 20; Keshone ‘Papi’ Young, age 24; Adam Hammer, age 17; Tahmair Timms, age 14; Rasoul Grant, age 23; Shahid Davis, age 19; Zymiren Best, age 19; Brent Swearingen, age 39; Quamir Tunnel, age 20; Jeremy Perez, age 15; Dyewou Scruggs, age 20; Masai Moore, age 20; Darrell McQueen, age 19; Corey James, age 30; Tahmair M. Timms, age 14; Isaiah Rankins, age 21; Sadeek Clark-Harrison, age 12; Khaleaf Sistrunk, age 21; Jerry Gooden, age 32; Sadiq Abdul-Shakur Haqq-Barks, age 20; Darrell McQueen, age 19; Corey James, age 30; Tahmair M. Timms, age 14; Isaiah Rankins, age 21; Sadeek Clark-Harrison, age 12; Khaleaf Sistrunk, age 21; Jerry Gooden, age 32; Sadiq Abdul-Shakur Haqq-Barks; Masai Moore, age 20; Darrell McQueen, age 19; Corey James, age 30; Tahmair M. Timms, age 14; Isaiah Rankins, age 21; Sadeek Clark-Harrison, age 12; Khaleaf Sistrunk, age 21; Jerry Gooden, age 32; Sadiq Abdul-Shakur Haqq-Barksdale, age 38; Nicholas Flacco, age 20; Christopher Hatch, age 25; Gregory Tunstall, age 34; Kaieri Williams, age 19; Brent Swearingen, age 39; Aaron Devine, age 25; Ammar Hassan, age 17; Ruben Alvarez, age 22; Jason Price Jr., 21; Anthony Abel, age 46; Kevin Triplett, age 59; Raheem Stoner, age 38; Henry Peterson Jr., age 26; Monte Felix Smith, age 27; Quantico Brunson, age 17; Quadir Flippen, age 31; Javier ‘Naji’ Conde, age 39; Jahsun Patton, age 18; Juwan Evans, age 23; **Andre Blackshear, age 56**; Michael Strong, age 21; Amir Boston, age 38; Barry Torrence, age 44; Joseph Konneh, age 21; Aidan Seddon, age 18; Tyrone A. Coach, age 19; Ronald Wilford, age 27; Skylar Owens Mooney, age 19; Donovan ‘Donny’ Porter, age 19; Rasheed Jamal Sloan, age 33; Daejour Smith, age 21; Tashon B. Whitfield, age 22; Omar Richard Wade, age 15; Tracy ‘Mia’ Green, age 26; Tysere Michael Igles, age 19; Rymeek Martin, age 21; Jonathan Salas-Kane, age 16; Eric “Abdul Baseer” Weary, age 36; Jayden Lucas, age 18; Khalid Henderson, age 21; Shyheim Jones, age 23; Tymir Aquil ‘MIRBUCKZ’ Singleton, age 21; Jaheim Lamarre, age 17; Zahques McFadden, age 17; Melanie Raye, age 40; Will Myatt, age 29; Jaleel D Huggins Cotton, age 21; Zamar Jones, age 7; Aliek Mack-Shabazz, age 24; Zamal Smith, age 21; Semaj Carter, age 21; Shaliyah Davis, age 25; Aamir Johnson Daye, age 18; Abdul Lamar Davis, age 43; Angelo Walker, age 15; Desiree D. Shaffer, age 37; Frederick Tynes, age 42; Bryon Johnson, age 51; Cornelius ‘Neil’ Fuller, age 22; Raisheem Rochwell, age 23; Rajib Ingram, age 9; Hector Toro, age 20; Delfon Canin, age 29; Zamire Holloway, age 18; Christopher Thomas, age 45; Joseph Lee Humphrey Jr., age 20; Kalil Stafford, age 18; Mumakk Crisden, age 19; Williams, age 17; Tyree Hand, age 19

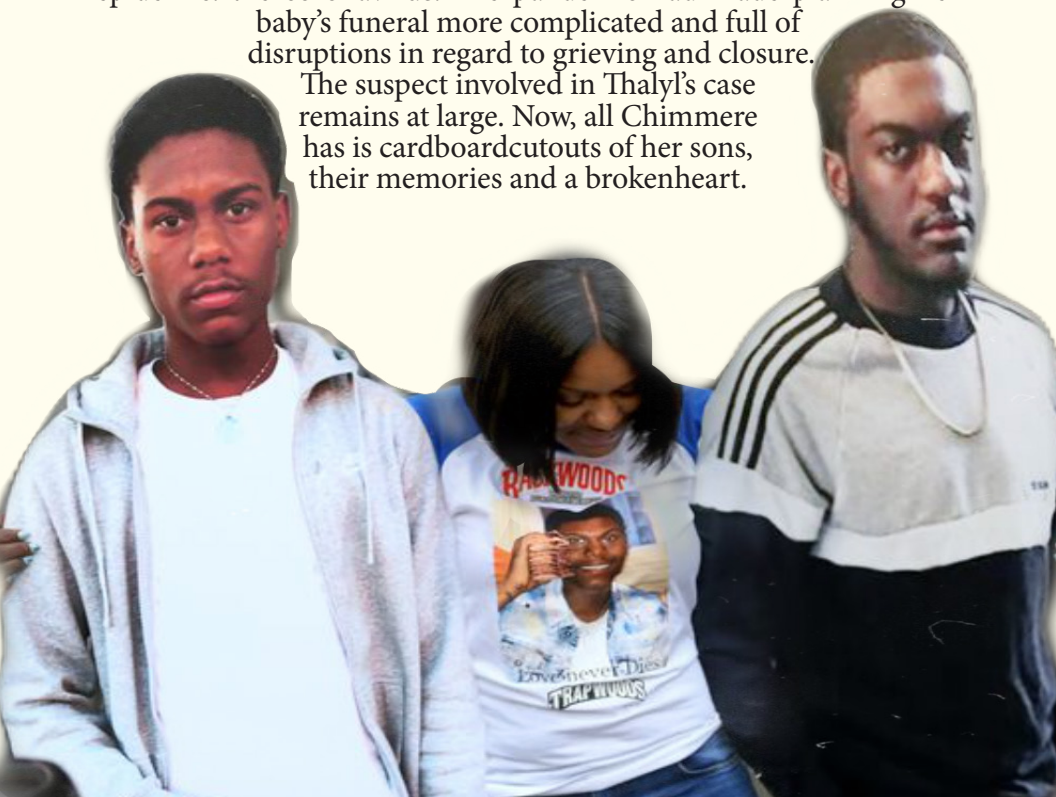
Thalyl Taylor Thomas Page

January 27th, 2003 - March 26th, 2020

June 24th, 1999 - September 6, 2018

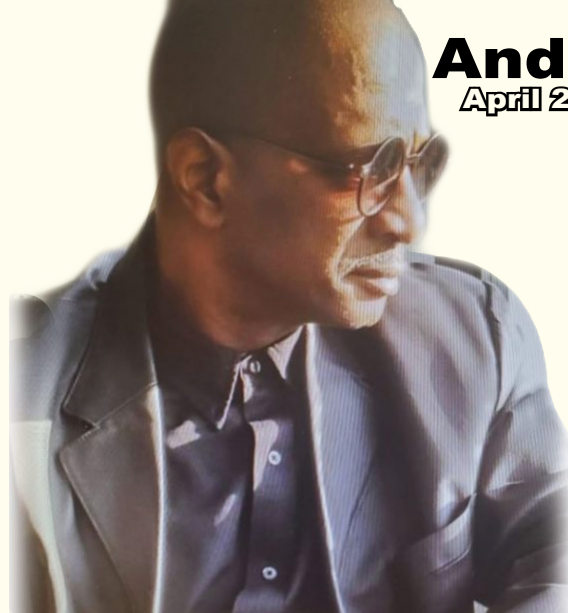
Chimmere Quattlebaum's life was filled with love thanks to her two sons, Thalyl and Thomas. She threw extravagant birthday parties for them, celebrated every life moment with them, and always went over-the-top for her boys. "My children are the air that I breathe", she says. However, what do you do when the two who make you laugh and love life are suddenly gone? This family was torn apart when Thomas, also known as Manny, was fatally shot on September 6th, 2018. At the time of his death, he was only 19. The family, lost and torn apart, after the loss of Thomas, was only brought closer together. Three months after his murder, there was an arrest, but Thalyl was still angry over the loss of his brother. According to his mother, this led Thalyl down a negative path filled with hatred from a broken heart. Nearly two years later, while Chimere was still grieving the loss of her son, she got a call. It was regarding her only remaining son, Thalyl. He suffered a gunshot wound to his shoulder on March 21st, 2020. He suffered a massive stroke during his surgery. He remained on life support until five days later. On March 26th, 2020, Thalyl Taylor, a 17-year old honor roll student who especially enjoyed science and his cat (Jade), became another victim of the on-going epidemic within the city of so-called brotherly love. The effect of the epidemic wasn't the first time it affected Chimmere's family. When Thalyl was just 3 years old, his father was gunned down. Now she had to deal with another epidemic: the coronavirus. The pandemic had made planning her baby's funeral more complicated and full of disruptions in regard to grieving and closure.

The suspect involved in Thalyl's case remains at large. Now, all Chimmere has is cardboard cutouts of her sons, their memories and a brokenheart.



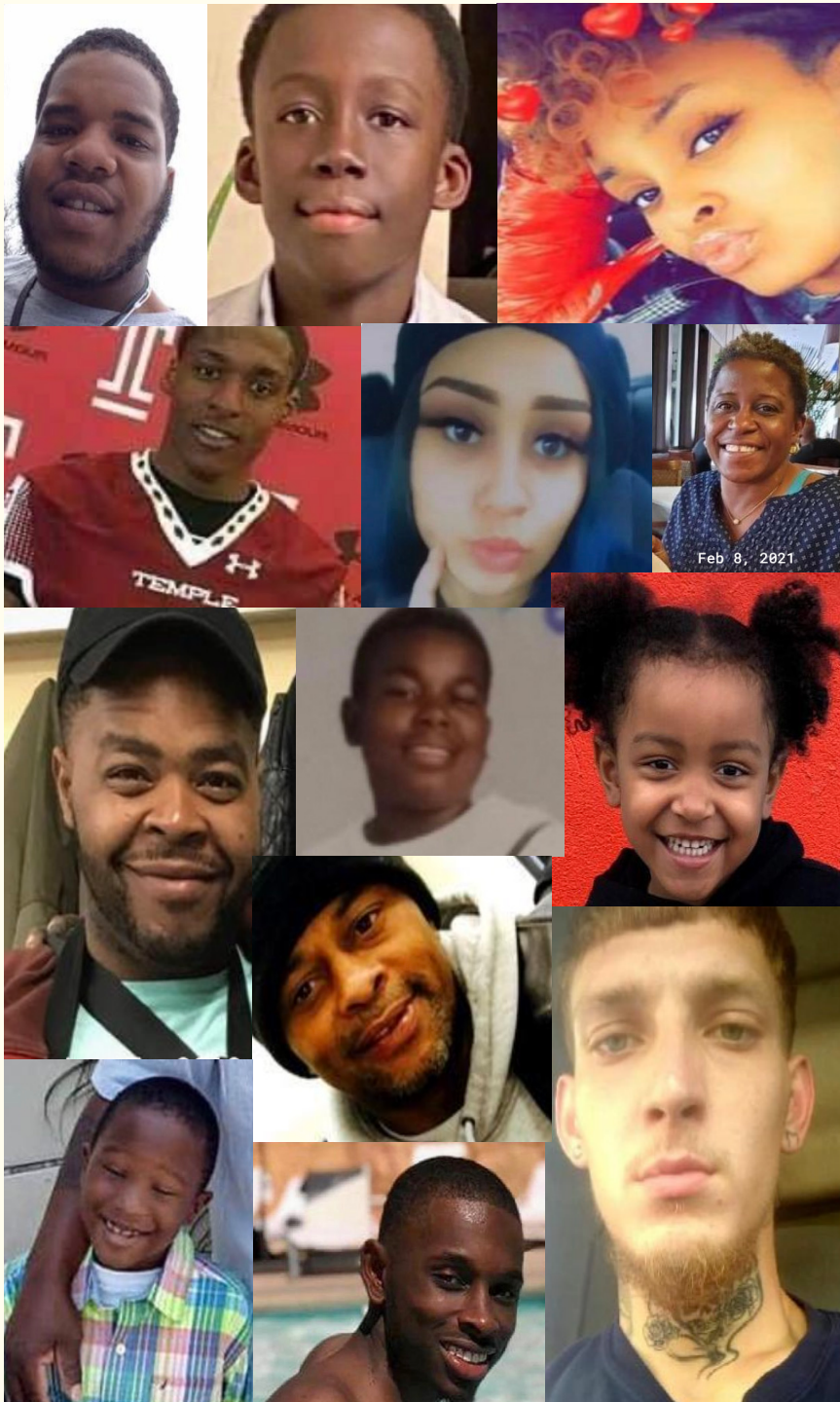
Andre Blackshear

April 22, 1964 - October 8th, 2020



"We just knew that he was our protector, we'd be safe outside", recalled Andre's fiancée, Amanda Mills. When they were younger Amanda recalled a time when her family was outside her childhood home and saw a domestic disturbance take place in the street. Soon, Andre Blackshear, approached the situation and stood up to the attacker and reprimanded the attacker and reminded him to never lay hands on a woman. She recalls times where they'd

be at the playground and he would remind the local children and teens not to turn disagreements into gun fights. Flashforward forty years later and he kept that same peacemaker energy. He would frequent recreational centers and playgrounds to advocate to local youths to get educated and not use guns or really any violence. He told many, "at the end of the day, if you need violence, you can use these (signaling his fists) and still walk away." Andre obtained his GED at a young age, where he went to develop a career in masonry work. He loved the Philadelphia Eagles and hated the Cowboys, who he would always call the "Dallas Cowgirls." He understood the troubles the youth faced in Philadelphia after experiencing the same paths himself. He sent money to a friend on death row for over thirty years. Andre was shot before by someone attempting to rob him, but when it was time for the suspect to go up for parole, Andre agreed to let him out because the man had two children. His fiancée noted how everything about him was kind-hearted and he always made her smile and feel like a queen. On October 8th, 2020, Amanda lost her love over a parking spot dispute. He was shot over fifteen times right outside his love's door. He was once again a victim of the problem in Philadelphia, but this time it took his life away. Even those who advocate against gun violence, can't escape it. His case, like most victims in Philadelphia, remains unsolved. Andre Blackshear was one of the nearly five-hundred victims who lost their life due to gun violence. He was one of nearly twenty-two hundred victims who were shot. He was born, raised, and ultimately killed in the Logan section of Philadelphia, which we was "SOOO proud to be from" according to a statement from the family listed on Phillyunsolvedmurders.com. He was someone's father, grandfather, fiance, uncle, brother, and friend to many. He was 56 years young.



**THEY
ARE
REAL
PEOPLE
NOT
STATISTICS**

Photos Uploaded by Loved Ones for Public Use and on
National Gun Violence Memorial: Philadelphia

Philadelphia Under Fire

How can we live in a world that is so controlling of what we see, hear, and take in? Doubt that exists? Well you'd be wrong. Unless you live right in Philadelphia, you only know what the news is telling you. One has to research to get their information and in some way, shape, and form a certain news source has influenced it. Of course, unless it is raw data or something of that nature. When I turn to my local news outlet, all I see is murder. However, the two murders I saw last night are only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total victims who lost their lives. The University of Pennsylvania research found in a study on the media's reporting of gun violence, that only 50% of those acts of violence weren't featured on the news. Nearly, 80% of those victims were Black, but less than half of them made the news. If the victim was a man, he was 40% less likely to be written about. The even worse thing about this is that their last statement about the victim to the public is often in a hundred words or less and mentions their gender, age, race, and location of death. The media makes such a disconnect from victims being actual people. If they were to showcase those who haven't passed and were victims of gun violence, there could be a difference. As much as I can criticize American news media, this isn't an anti-news campaign.

Since 2015, nearly nine-thousand Philadelphians have become a victim of gun violence, which equates to just shy of one-percent of its population. Of those cases, there were only convictions in eight hundred of them. Even though these victims are one-percent of the population, it affects nearly the whole population. For example, if someone under eighteen became a victim and lost their life, it not only affects their family, it affects their friends at school and their family, so on and so forth. How do we put an end to what seems like a never ending cycle? That is certainly a leading question when it comes to solving this epidemic. Oh, but who cares? Surely, the millionaire and mayor Jim Kenney would....not. Within the last year he committed 0.67% of the \$5.2 billion spending of the budget, which is only about \$30 million. Looking at it, 30 million dollars seems like alot, but for a city corrupted with mass-violence it is so little. As Philly Mag said, "Philly is more fiscally committed to smoothing bumps in the road than to stopping violence in our streets."

So how can we really get rid of this epidemic? Some researchers suggest that this will never end, others are more optimistic and found there are three sectors that could help bring down the alarming rates. The first thing they feel that could address is poverty. Philly is one of the largest cities in the United States, yet ranks high in levels of poverty too. If you look at a map of the poorest neighborhoods in Philadelphia, it would align with a diagram of the most recent shooting locations. Philly's idea of solving this? Giving the majority

of the money put aside to address this issue to the community groups and letting them decide where to put it. This "trickle-down-esq" plan doesn't help anyone in the end. While its great nonprofits are getting more funding, it leads to a false impression that the money will help the individuals within that community and their troubles. Many call for after school programs, employment opportunities, and various other ways to combat poverty. The pandemic has been another factor in the extreme rise of gun violence due to the issues that led to unemployment. Over one-hundred and twenty thousand residents are unemployed, which is over one-tenth of Philadelphia's population. This left many out of work and money-hungry in order to provide for their families and loved ones. Many feel that seminars, school required apprenticeships/jobs, and help for those coming out of incarceration, would be a big step in aiding in unemployment. One of the biggest issues preventing the end of this epidemic is the never-ending institutional racism. The colorblind approach to it doesn't make any advancements because we are not recognizing the real victims. Sure, it can vary in race, gender, ethnicity, and more, but predominantly it is the young black man that falls to the title of victim. In order to move forward, we need to recognize it. We need to teach our sons and daughters to watch what they say and do online. We need to elect politicians who do and not say.

We need to protect the people of Philadelphia.



Photo by Jason Dilks from Pexels

Philadelphia's District Attorney Race

This May, there will be an extremely important primary race for the district attorney's race. The district attorney has an abundance of roles focusing mostly on policy debates and the criminal justice system. Many feel this is an extremely important race due to the extreme rise of gun violence within the past term served by Larry Krasner. Many blame Krasner's actions and decisions on Philadelphia's downfall. There is one frontrunner on the Republican side, and two butting heads for the Democrats. It is one unique election where the Democratic party isn't endorsing a candidate. Thousands have switched from Republican to Democrat just to make sure one candidate wins over another. You have the Republican candidate willing to drop out as long as Vega beats Krasner. While it might feel like one big headache to weigh the experience, possible consequences, and circumstances surrounding all of the candidates, it is just as important to vote for this primary as it is to vote for the 2020 presidential election. Who will ultimately face each other in the end? Only time will tell until May 18th. Go out, educate yourself, and vote if you are a Philadelphia resident.

Charles Peruto (R)

is the leading candidate for the Republican primary for District Attorney. He was born and raised in the Overbrook section of West Philadelphia. He attended a Catholic Seminary for a year, then realized he wanted to be a lawyer and attended St. Joseph's University and earned his law degree from Delaware Law School. He has been a practicing attorney in Philadelphia for over 40 years. Charles is known for being a bit of a party animal and sometimes called a womanizer. With a simple Google search of his name, you can find images of him and multiple women dressed in bikinis on expensive boats. In 2013, a new girlfriend of his was found deceased in his bathtub. He was not found guilty and claims his self-sworn "enemy" who tried against him, was in jail because of his findings. What does he plan to do? He plans to hire the right people (not just Harvard and Yale graduates) to tackle his issues of focus like the opioids crisis, the death penalty, immigration, prisoner rights, marijuana, and much more. If his opponent in the end is Carlos Vega, he will drop out of the race. If it is Larry Krasner, he will remain in the race. Currently, he is endorsed by mostly retired judges and those in police-related professions.



Larry Krasner (D)

was elected District Attorney of Philadelphia on November 7th, 2017. He is running again to be elected for one last and final term to serve the position he currently holds. He is from St. Louis, but attend public schools in St. Louis and Philadelphia area (meaning suburban public school). He earned his degrees from University of Chicago and Stanford Law School. He returned to Philadelphia to work as a criminal defense, but mostly a civil rights attorney. He has worked to drop the jail population, not by releasing many for petty crimes, but by releasing those who have serious criminal offenses like murder, rape, and more, and not catching those who have murdered nearly 1,500 Philadelphians in his term. Don't believe it? Statistics from the Philadelphia government prove that only 1 in 16 cases have a conviction rate of 6%. So that means, only 6% of those families (including victims who aren't deceased) have to live knowing their shooter is loose. Larry claims he has kept his promises but there is still more to do! He is backed by various local organizations, national organizations, and celebrities and higher officials like John Legend and George Soros, who have no residence in Philadelphia.

Carlos Vega (D)

is another leading option in choice for the Democratic Party primary regarding the selection for District Attorney of Philadelphia. He is the son of Puerto Rican immigrants and lived in New York City during horrendous crime-filled times. Carlos grew up helping run his mother's bodega. He recalls the time when the bodega was robbed at gunpoint. He saw the effects of prejudice, racial injustice, and economic injustice when various friends, family and neighbors fell victim and suspects to it. Due to his past, he decided to become a prosecutor to make sure people like him and live and work in a safe environment. He graduated from Boston College Law School and was brought to Philadelphia by at-the-time District Attorney Ed Rendell, who went on to become Mayor of Philadelphia to the Governor of Pennsylvania representing the Democratic Party. Carlos was the first Latino homicide prosecutor in Pennsylvania. He is a family man who took up a second job for fifteen years so he didn't spend so much time on cases to be with his kids while they grew up. Carlos is looking to end the gun violence epidemic and stand up for the victims and their families. It starts with rooting out the injustices in our system and breaking that school-to-prison pipeline. Vega has thousands of supporters, but nearly not as much funding as Krasner has. He is certainly the underdog.



A Reflection

I don't even know where to begin. When I did the extensive research for this piece, I cried...a lot. Majority of it was things I already knew, but seeing their faces, their smiles, their ages, it's truly heartbreaking. I have become so numb to this epidemic in my own city that seeing their faces brought me back to my human state. I live in the most-middle-class neighborhood that Philadelphia could have, Somerton. On Niche, it is ranked as #60 out of 149, which isn't too bad, but isn't the best. I definitely can't speak to the level that one who lives in North Philadelphia or Hunting Park could, where there is violence on every corner to the point where you can't avoid it. When I drive in those neighborhoods, even knowing that they are what are labeled as "dangerous parts" I don't fear. Most likely just because I am a visitor to the neighborhood, whether it was to my boyfriend's apartment or picking him up from work; I feel safe. I can't imagine the trauma residents of those neighborhoods feel and the emotional turmoil they go through on a daily basis. However, I can't say that I have escaped the turmoils related to gun violence and homicides just because I live in Somerton.

When I was young, my cousin was sitting on his mom's porch and suddenly he heard a frantic scream. Instinctively, he ran to see what was the cause of the scream. Shortly after, he found a couple being robbed and went to go help them. Soon, he found himself in confrontation with the suspect and even though the suspect was masked, he knew the voice. It was an old acquaintance of his and suddenly found a bullet lodged in his lower abdomen. The suspect ran off and was jailed later. Luckily, my cousin is still here to this day; still with the bullet in his lower abdomen.

As I began to get older and enter high school, more violence was brought to my attention. In Junior year, on one spring night, a fellow classmate of mine's brother was shot and killed at a park after attending a Phillies game. The reason? A disagreement over another recent murder of a South Philly teen. Her brother, Nick, was home for the weekend from college for his birthday. He had just turned 20 years old. I have never seen so many young people packed into a church, and it wasn't the last time.

This past year, I attended two funerals, one virtually and one in-person. Both young people, killed for senseless reasons. Morgan McCaffery, had her future set. She had just gotten in a new relationship and started summer courses at her college. She had graduated from my high school, a grade below, despite the online circumstances. However, one person had it out for her; her ex-boyfriend. Being the kind-hearted person she was, she agreed to meet up with him to give him clarity over their breakup, where she never returned. He had ended up going to the meetup with the intent to murder, which he did. Morgan was slashed and stabbed with a knife nearly thirty times. She was only 18 years old. Finally, one of the hardest hitting ones was my best friend, whose family is practically mine's cousin. I was one of the first calls and texts from her when she first found out her cousin was shot. We stalked the Citizen's App reportings and police scanners to find out every possible detail we could. Sadly, he was gunned down. Her family is practically my own. I heard endless stories and accounts of him. The reason for this murder? Unknown. The killer is still on the loose. He too was young, only 21.

I always consider myself at-risk because of my age in Philly. Something I always say is if you have lived in Philly and made it past 24, your old. Why? Because of the on-going violence that is affecting the young people of this city. I am sick and tired of it. I wish people would stop using social media to unleash themselves and show off. If anything like Andre Blackshear said use your hands. This needs to end before more lives are lost.



Kimberly Paynter/WHYY

Credits and Sources

INFORMATION AND DATA

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Vote Vega for District Attorney. vegaforda.com.

WRITINGS

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Philadelphia Photography

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The Philly Obituary Project

Kimberly Paynter/WHYY

Charles Peruto Jr. Courtesy photo

Carlos Vega Courtesy photo