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**Contact: Kimberlee Leach
Director of Communications
Dallas County District Attorney's Office
214-653-3756 (Office)
Kimberlee.leach@DallasCounty.org**

For Immediate Release: Life Sentence for Former Doctor Charged in 30-Year-Old Cold Case Capital Murder

(Dallas, Texas) – Former surgeon George Guo will spend the rest of his life in prison after a Dallas County jury handed down a guilty verdict for capital murder. The 58-year-old defendant was charged in the death of Katherine Bascone.

On Father's Day, June 19, 1988, Ms. Bascone was raped, strangled, and left for dead. She survived the assault but suffered severe brain damage. She and her family suffered greatly over the next three decades. Katherine ultimately passed away in February of 2018, 30 years after the attack.

The successful prosecution of this case would not have been possible without the work and dedication of several key people. First, Dr. Jeremy Shelton, the medical examiner in Oklahoma who rejected a request for cremation and instead insisted on an autopsy. The autopsy found that Ms. Bascone's death was the result of the severe brain injury from the strangulation 30 years ago at the hands of, at the time, an unknown person. Her death was ruled a homicide.

Second, the medical examiner reached out to the agency that handled the assault case, the Highland Park Department of Public Safety, to request any evidence that might still be in custody from Ms. Bascone's attack in 1988. The department had some evidence, but also reached out to the Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences or SWIFS, to see if they still had the DNA sexual assault kit from 1988. After 30 years, it was still intact and secured at SWIFS. Next, it was the Dallas County Criminal District Attorney's Office Cold Case Team (SAKI) turn to confirm a DNA match and bring that person to justice.

Thanks to creative thinking years earlier by Administrative Chief Amy Derrick and Cold

Case Chief Leighton D'Antoni, the office was awarded additional funding by the Department of Justice in addition to their original 2015 SAKI Cold Case Grant. This new federal funding would allow them to test—untested rape or sexual assault kits tied to Unsolved Homicide cases. The unknown male DNA profile from Ms. Bascione's sexual Assault kit was submitted and got a hit—it was George Guo.

Guo was arrested in June 2018 and Lead Prosecutor Leighton D'Antoni and his team, including Lead Investigator Tammy Goodman, Investigator Jon Wakefield, ADA Derrick, and ADA Blake Penfield, began building their case against Guo. D'Antoni had to prosecute the case under 1988 law—the year the crime occurred. That meant that Guo was eligible for life with the possibility of parole.

The trial lasted two weeks but in the end, D'Antoni's closing remarks to jurors sealed Guo's fate, "There's nothing worse in this world than when evil finds innocence and destroys it—and while death doesn't distinguish between the sinners and the saints, justice does. Justice will hold those who murder accountable. It will hold those who rape accountable."

And that is just what jurors did—found Guo guilty and gave him the harshest punishment allowed under the law.

Frank Crowley Courts Building • 133 N. Riverfront Blvd., L.B. 19 • Dallas, Texas 75207-4399 • 214/653-3600