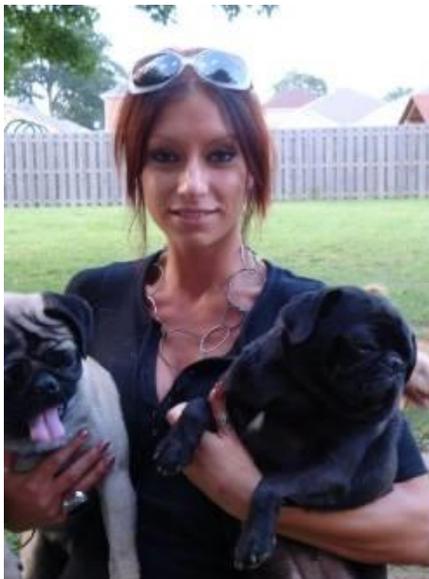


Prosecutors Mark Bennett, Dan Kasaris and Criminal Defendant Marty Maurer Potential ‘Persons of Interest’ in Suspicious Death of Dawn Pasela

- *Whistleblower Dawn Pasela found dead under suspicious circumstances as she was about to testify about Prosecutorial Misconduct by Bennett and Kasaris*
- *Kasaris destroyed his computer the day Dawn died*
- *Illegal voice recordings & affair between Kasaris and government witness at issue*
- *Three cell phones found at death scene but not collected by the Police*
- *Uncovered.com Accepts Dawn’s Case, now gathering new evidence*
- *Yale Law School accepts evidentiary case on behalf of Anthony Viola seeking recordings, additional evidence, while Attorney Kim Corral now representing the Pasela Family*

The death of whistleblower Dawn Pasela as she was scheduled to testify in open court about misconduct committed by Prosecutors Mark Bennett and Dan Kasaris has long been seen as too convenient of a coincidence to believe. Her passing, initially attributed to an alcohol overdose with a blood-alcohol content of .59, followed a cursory autopsy and a police investigation that failed to interview a single witness or even collect any evidence. Suspicions of foul play have swirled for years but no hard evidence emerged, leaving Dawn’s family and friends not only heartbroken, but distraught about the circumstances surrounding her death. Now, newly discovered evidence, which is summarized below, establishes that Dawn’s death was no ‘accidental overdose’ of alcohol but the result of foul play.



Dawn Pasela, who volunteered at the Parma Animal Hospital, Fostered Rescue dogs before their adoption by local families.

Summary of Newly Discovered Evidence

Throughout 2022 and 2023, a torrent of new evidence and witness statements have established that Dawn's death was the result of foul play, including:

- Law enforcement recently questioned Senior Assistant Ohio Attorney General Dan Kasaris about his appearance at Dawn's apartment shortly before her death.
- Newly obtained documents and witness statements identify criminal defendant Marty Maurer – who was at Dawn's apartment just hours before she died -- as a potential person of interest, and an individual who possesses information about what happened to Dawn.
- After an exhaustive search for EMS or ambulance records, it was finally determined that the Police never called an ambulance – they called a mortuary service to Dawn's apartment.
- Newly obtained medical examiner photos raise several new questions – including possible bruising on Dawn's neck, the discovery of three cell phones at the death scene and the appearance of Energy Drinks – which Dawn didn't like – in her apartment.
- A new statement from former Task Force Chairman Donald Cleland confirms Dawn wore a wire in an illegal spying operation and was given all of the evidence in over 1,000 criminal cases to stash at her apartment – seemingly making her a target of anyone who was aware these materials were at her residence.

A detailed narrative follows and provides additional context and background on all that's taken place.

Rising Star

Born in 1985, Dawn graduated at the top of her class at both Cleveland State and at Cuyahoga County Community College, where she was President and founder of Phi Theta Kapa, a member of the National Honor Society's Dean's List and an important participant in the Criminal Justice Club. One of Dawn's professors at Tri-C, Detective Arvin Clar, actively recruited Dawn for an open position in the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Once there, her superiors quickly recognized her intelligence, work ethic and computer skills. At the same time, the AG's office established a multi-jurisdictional mortgage fraud task force, consisting of a dozen federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The AG's Office asked Dawn to interview for the position as Task Force Office Manager with Dan Kasaris, the head of Economic Crimes Prosecutions in Cuyahoga County. Kasaris was impressed with Dawn and, after consultations with federal prosecutor Mark Bennett, hired

her. Dawn leapfrogged over older, more experienced employees to land a plum job at age 23 and quickly established herself as an indispensable part of the Task Force, logging evidence in hundreds of criminal cases, helping prosecutors prepare for trial and digitizing evidence for distribution to defense attorneys.

The Task Force Charges over 1,000 individuals with Racketeering and Felonies

According to a study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, “With a four-fold increase in foreclosures from 1995 to 2007 and entire neighborhoods decimated by vacant and abandoned homes, Cuyahoga County— one of the epicenters of the nation’s foreclosure crisis—has served as a striking example of the devastation wrought by the mortgage lending meltdown.” The Mortgage Fraud Task Force wasted little time initiating criminal charges against local real estate investors, real estate agents, loan officers and developers, because, according to the Task Force, these foreclosures were largely the result of fraud. Prosecutions alleged that borrowers were not allowed acquire homes without a down payment and that any properties acquired ‘no money down’ were the result of fraudulent loan applications or misstatements concerning a borrower’s income and assets.

Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Bill Mason said, "These criminals are mortgage fraud predators and deserve every year in prison that they receive. While these hoodlums were illegally making money, they were devastating our neighborhoods with foreclosures." Despite the tough talk, the Task Force had to pay the salaries of newly hired personnel, so the constituent agencies of the Task Force asked Dawn to complete the necessary applications to secure federal grants to help fund the operation. Shortly thereafter, Bureau of Justice Assistance Grant # 2009-SC - B9-0080 was issued, and federal funds were utilized to pursue Task Force cases. All told, the Task Force prosecuted over 1,000 individuals and collected nearly \$20 million in restitution, according to reports it provided to the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Prosecution of Tony Viola in the ‘Nation’s Largest Mortgage Fraud Case’

Among the individuals prosecuted by the Task Force was business owner Tony Viola, who founded real estate brokerage Realty Corporation of America in Cleveland. Realty Corp had grown into one of the largest locally owned brokerages in Ohio, with over 100 associates, and was focused on residential and commercial brokerage, property management services and real estate auctions. Following the televised raid of a dozen local businesses, including Viola’s headquarters in Downtown Cleveland, the Task Force prosecuted Viola simultaneously in both state and federal court on identical charges. According to indictments, press releases, and statements made to the media, federal prosecutor Mark Bennett and state prosecutor Dan Kasaris alleged that Viola devised the “Nation’s largest mortgage fraud scheme” and stole nearly \$46 million by duping lenders

including JP Morgan Chase and Citigroup into making ‘no money down’ mortgage loans that did not meet banks’ underwriting guidelines. But the charges against Viola contained a fatal flaw – incorrect statements that Viola owned and controlled “Family Title Services” and “Transcontinental Lending Group,” when such was not the case. Viola’s colleagues voiced support for his claim of innocence. Much to Kasaris and Bennett’s surprise, Viola demanded the government produce all evidence in its possession, answered questions from journalists, refused to plead guilty and immediately began preparing for trial.



Prosecutor Mark Bennett, above, was joined by other Task Force members at a press conference in Cleveland as he announced the indictment of Tony Viola in both state and federal court

Evidence at the Task Force Vanishes

Viola’s attorneys devised a simple defense: He never had anything to do with mortgages, never received one cent from businesses he didn’t own and was not involved as an employee, shareholder or officer of these firms. Viola’s defense team retained a forensic accountant to prepare a report stating Viola was not involved with these mortgage and title businesses and never received any money from them. Shortly after criminal cases were filed, Viola’s lawyers asked the government to turn over computers -- seized in televised raids -- from these businesses. After months of delay, Mark Bennett informed defense attorneys the computers in question were “lost,” and attorney Leonard Carr wrote “the computers in question may have been lost or misplaced within the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office.”

Kathryn Clover becomes a Government Witness and Assists Mark Bennett and Dan Kasaris in dozens of Criminal Cases

Kathryn Clover started a modeling agency in the early 2000s, then began investing profits into income producing real estate. Clover teamed up with other real estate investors, including Keller Williams agent Paul Lesniak and other business partners, to accumulate a portfolio of nearly 100 investment properties. Clover and her partners acquired properties through several real estate brokerages, including Viola's firm, and later launched their own real estate business. Several years following her acquisition of properties, Clover struggled to rent one of her houses and – according to her husband Matt Fairfield -- committed arson there to pocket a large insurance payout. But insurance adjusters found the fire suspicious and corporate fraud investigators contacted law enforcement to report their concerns. Shortly thereafter, federal prosecutor Mark Bennett targeted Clover for prosecution for arson and bankruptcy fraud, as Clover later discharged over \$1 million in debt and filed a false police report, claiming she was robbed of her wedding ring by a person of color, so she wouldn't have to declare this asset as part of her bankruptcy filing.

Clover retained criminal defense attorney Michael Goldberg, who advised her to be honest in interviews with law enforcement officials. In one such meeting, Clover first met Kasaris. Realizing she was nervous, and attracted to the then 27-year-old former model, Kasaris told Clover she could avoid criminal charges if she assisted him with other mortgage fraud investigations. She instantly agreed, began meeting with investigators without her attorney, then began working with Kasaris directly. Kasaris arranged for Clover to attend law school at no cost through a "Barrister's Scholarship" from the Cleveland State University College of Law then retained Clover as his paralegal inside the Task Force. In exchange, Clover agreed to testify in front of grand juries to secure indictments on behalf of the Task Force.

A sexual relationship between Kasaris and Clover commenced almost immediately; the couple was spotted together at a baseball game and at local bars in Lakewood, Ohio. Clover's husband Matt stated under oath that he became concerned Clover "was meeting prosecutor Dan Kasaris outside of the office at all hours of the day and night" and saw "text messages" of a sexual nature between them. When he confronted her, she admitted the affair, telling Fairfield she was "in love with Dan Kasaris." Fairfield threatened to inform the US Attorney about the affair, but Fairfield was promptly arrested and imprisoned by none other than Dan Kasaris and Arvin Clar.

Back at the Task Force, Dawn was surprised at Clover's dual role – both as a government witness, testifying as the Task Force's "go to" witness in grand jury proceedings and at criminal trials, while also simultaneously serving as a paralegal for Kasaris, sitting in on meetings with law enforcement officials and during interviews with other government witnesses. Dawn knew something was amiss, because a fundamental rule of law enforcement is that during witness interviews, individuals should be separated,

interviewed alone and instructed to avoid discussing details of any crime with other witnesses so evidence is based on an individual's actual knowledge of events. As time went on, and with Matt Fairfield in jail, Kasaris and Clover became more brazen carrying out their affair, often going out together in public. On several occasions, Clover and Kasaris even left the Prosecutor's office together in the middle of the day and returned several hours later, sparking rumors of rampant, mid-day sexual activities. One of Clover's friends, Bryan Butler, saw some of the sexually explicit text messages between Clover and Kasaris, and claims Clover considered Kasaris a stalker and a sexual predator.

Bennett and Kasaris obtain Viola's Trial Strategy

Viola's simultaneous prosecution in both state and federal court – at the same time and on the same charges – was virtually unheard of and the subject of a media frenzy. Initially basking in favorable coverage, Bennett and Kasaris were surprised that Viola's real estate business survived their onslaught and that Viola's friends and supporters organized a series of events to raise money for legal fees and identify defense witnesses for the upcoming trials. Prosecutors worried their high-profile case against Viola would fall apart if Viola could establish he never originated or obtained any mortgages and never received any money from suspect transactions. Unwilling to admit error or dismiss the case, and not expecting Viola to force the government to put on two criminal trials, Bennett and Kasaris initially claimed they "lost" computers central to his defense, but Viola still refused to plead guilty. Later, Bennett and Kasaris hatched a plan to find out as much as they could about Viola's defense trial preparation. And to do so, they once again turned to Dawn Pasela. Even though Dawn was not trained as an undercover officer, Kasaris provided her with a wire and directed her to pose as a graduate student studying criminal justice and working with local defense attorneys. Pasela met Viola at a legal defense fundraiser at AJ Rocco's in downtown Cleveland, claiming she was assisting defense counsel on similar cases. She offered to share information, support his defense and met with Viola on several occasions – one discussion took place with Viola's attorney while another meeting was at Viola's real estate office – but the real purpose of these conversations was for prosecutors to obtain confidential defense trial strategy information. In addition to these recordings, Kasaris gave Dawn cash and directed her to donate those funds towards Viola's legal fees so the Task Force could use her cancelled check to identify the law firm's bank account, track investigative expenses and identify potential defense witnesses. Prosecutors acted on the information gleaned from these recordings – Mark Bennett obtained an Ex Parte order limiting Viola's defense, while Dan Kasaris tipped off FBI Agent Jeff Kassouf off about who was organizing fundraisers on Viola's behalf. Agent Kassouf promptly threatened those individuals (including real estate financier Brian Stark) with arrest if they continued to assist Viola.

Confrontation with Prosecutor Kasaris on the Eve of Viola's federal trial

Meanwhile, the Task Force continued to pursue its cases on the theory that banks themselves were innocent victims of mortgage fraud schemes, but no one at the Task Force ever interviewed any of these “victims” until shortly before Viola’s first trial. Given the large number of transactions at issue in multiple criminal cases, Prosecutors Bennett and Kasaris asked Argent Executive Steve Newcombe to spend a full week in Cleveland to review transactions listed in various indictments, including the Viola case, shortly before his testimony at Viola’s first trial, where the bank would be portrayed as an innocent victim of Viola’s mortgage fraud schemes.

In advance of Newcombe’s visit, Dawn prepared the conference room by first reviewing indictments, then identifying all loans and corresponding mortgage files originated by the lender Newcombe represented, Argent Mortgage. Dawn – joined by FBI Agents, Mark Bennett, Dan Kasaris and Kathryn Clover – were a part of a week-long marathon review of mortgage files and loan documents. Dawn took notes and gathered information while Kathryn Clover made a spreadsheet with details of each transaction. But the meeting took a surprising turn when the banker – apparently for the first time – examined the files from the specific properties at issue in Viola’s case.

“None of these loans should have been made,” Newcombe told stunned members of the Task Force, including FBI Agent Jeff Kassouf, who was preparing an FBI 302 Interview Summary. “These loans were submitted as no money down, without income or asset information. Our employees were authorized to approve loans like this, but these deals were a stretch. I don’t think there was fraud, I just think we said OK to some questionable loans.”

Clover continued to enter comments into her spreadsheet confirming lender employees knew borrowers were not making a down payment, but Dawn was shocked by this statement. Moments later, when bankers reviewed their own approval sheets on loans in Viola’s case, written documents established that banks authorized borrowers to receive cash back on properties referenced in Viola’s indictment. Dawn immediately realized what these documents meant: Viola – and all of the other defendants – were innocent. Banks weren’t tricked. No one duped any lenders into making any ‘no money down’ mortgage loans. Moreover, the government’s theory that banks were somehow “victims” in these cases struck Dawn as inconceivable. Prosecutors Bennett and Kasaris had been telling journalists that the “victims” were tenants residing in substandard housing, or neighbors who lived near houses that went into foreclosure and remained unkempt or magnets for crime. Now, the government’s case seemed impossible to justify. Not only were prosecutors using their authority to defend the actions of lenders, who actually approved these loans in writing, but in doing so, they were prosecuting innocent citizens in the process.

After Newcombe left the Prosecutor's Office for the day, Dawn confronted Kasaris, asking him how criminal cases could continue without any factual basis. Unhappy with her outburst, Kasaris told Dawn she was just a secretary, keep her opinions to herself, or she'd be out of a job. Dawn left the office in tears. Days later, however, she located the FBI Interview summary where Newcombe stated that lender employees were authorized to approve 'no money down, cash back' mortgage loans and made a copy. Dawn also made copies of the lender closing instructions and underwriting worksheets in which lenders approved – in writing and before closing -- 'no money down' mortgage loans to borrowers without requiring income or assets. She also secured copies of lender program guidelines that proved the government's theory of the case was wrong – banks promoted, offered and signed off on the very 'no money down, cash back' mortgage loans prosecutors alleged Viola and others duped them into making.

Viola is convicted in Federal Court

At Viola's first trial in federal court, Kathryn Clover testified that Viola owned Family Title and that he told her to make false statements on her loan applications. Bankers told jurors they did not offer or permit 'no money down' loans. Steve Newcombe falsely said he was not intimately familiar with the particular loans in Viola's case, but added that Argent did not permit 'no money down' mortgages, and that if anyone obtained such mortgages, it was the result of fraud. Having established that fraud took place, and tying Viola to scams through the testimony of Kathryn Clover, and with Viola's defense compromised due to the intrusion by prosecutors into his trial preparations, Viola was convicted after a two month long federal trial.

After Viola's Conviction in Federal Court, Dawn Pasela Contacts Viola

Shortly after the jury verdict of guilty, but prior to the federal sentencing, Viola remained free on bond. At that point, Dawn contacted Viola, confessed to the spying operation and provided him with federal evidence withheld before the first trial but that she believed proved his innocence. Viola's initial defense was that if any fraud took place at mortgage businesses, he was not involved and should not have been charged, but Dawn advised Viola to present an even simpler defense: it doesn't matter who owned what company, or what Kathryn Clover says, because there was no mortgage fraud, period. Lenders eagerly approved 'no money down' loans in writing, then "waived" income and down payment requirements. Armed with documents confirming as much, Viola and Dawn worked together to prepare for the second trial before he was imprisoned on federal charges.

Viola's Second Trial

At this second trial, Viola represented himself from jail, while Dawn agreed to testify, as a whistleblower, about extraordinary misconduct at the Task Force, including:

- That Bennett and Kasaris were so desperate to find out about Viola's defense trial strategy that they ordered Dawn to record a series of post-indictment conversations with him over a 24-month period to obtain confidential defense trial strategy information, while never providing these tapes to the defense before trial.
- The suppression of exculpatory evidence proving the innocence of many defendants.
- The computers Bennett and Kasaris claimed were "lost" were actually destroyed – statements later supported by both Matt Fairfield and Bryan Butler.
- That Dawn was given government funds to donate towards Viola's legal fees so prosecutors could use her cancelled checks to identify then subpoena Viola's law firm's bank account, track investigative expenses, and identify potential defense witnesses, illegally interfering with Viola's constitutional right to prepare for trial.
- The romantic relationship between Kasaris and Clover; and
- That Dawn's name on an Evidence Log was routinely forged.

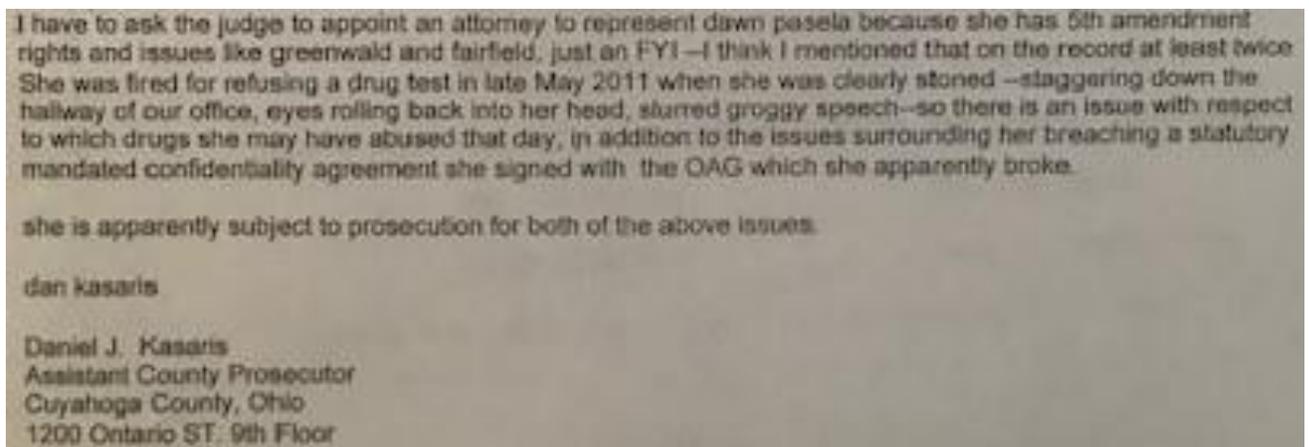
822974	DEFENSE SUBPOENA (Criminal Rule 17)	RECEIVED FOR FILING 03/15/2012 08:34:25 GERALD E. FUERST, CLERK
THE STATE OF OHIO Cuyahoga County	PRECIPE	DS 822974 Case Number: CR-10- 543886 -A
To the Sheriff of Cuyahoga County: You are hereby commanded to summon: DAWN PASELA 5676 BROADVIEW ROAD APT. 201 CLEVELAND, OH 44134-0000		JUDGE: DANIEL GAUL ROOM: JC19D
Please Call Defense Attorney: JOHN B GIBBONS at (216) 363-6086 BEFORE Appearing		
<u>TO THE WITNESS</u> YOU ARE HEREBY ordered to appear, under penalty of law, before the COURT OF COMMON PLEAS, held at the Courts Tower - Justice Center, Lakeside and Ontario Streets, in the City of Cleveland, within and for said County, on the 21st day of March, 2012, at 09:00 o'clock A.M., to testify to all and singular such matters and things which you may know in a certain action in court pending, and then and there to be determined, between the STATE OF OHIO, plaintiff, and ANTHONY L. VIOLA (defendant 11873387), on the part of the DEFENSE.		

Dawn was subpoenaed to testify at Viola's second trial, and Even Provided Viola with a list of questions to ask her

As the second trial got underway, Bennett and Kasaris were certain Viola would be convicted a second time and sentenced to an additional decade or two in prison, but the first sign of trouble was when Viola confronted Kathryn Clover with documents from her

own mortgage applications. These documents stated that she was not making any down payment, forcing her to concede her loan applications did not contain false statements. Clover also admitted Viola did not own Family Title or Transcontinental Lending, then recanted her federal court testimony and even took the Fifth Amendment. Viola then confronted bankers with their own documents and presented evidence of his innocence to shocked government witnesses. Momentum was on Viola's side and his supporters who came to court were confident he was winning. Bennett and Kasaris started to worry they may lose the trial but when they saw Dawn's name on the defense witness list, they were terrified that all Task Force prosecutions would be called into question if she testified.

Kasaris told Viola to remove Dawn from his witness list and threatened Dawn with "indictment," and "prosecution," if she testified. Detective Arvin Clar and Kasaris went to Dawn's apartment on multiple occasions in the days before her death to threaten her with prison because – according to Kasaris' own written statements – she violated a "confidentiality agreement" she signed with the Ohio Attorney General's Office when she contacted Viola to provide him with exculpatory evidence. In fear for her personal safety, Dawn left her apartment and hid at her parents' house.



I have to ask the judge to appoint an attorney to represent dawn pasela because she has 5th amendment rights and issues like greenwald and fairfield. just an FYI—I think I mentioned that on the record at least twice She was fired for refusing a drug test in late May 2011 when she was clearly stoned –slaggering down the hallway of our office, eyes rolling back into her head, slurred groggy speech--so there is an issue with respect to which drugs she may have abused that day, in addition to the issues surrounding her breaching a statutory mandated confidentiality agreement she signed with the OAG which she apparently broke.

she is apparently subject to prosecution for both of the above issues.

dan kasaris

Daniel J. Kasaris
Assistant County Prosecutor
Cuyahoga County, Ohio
1200 Ontario ST. 9th Floor

Kasaris claimed Dawn Pasela Violated a Confidentiality Agreement and that would be prosecuted as a result

According to sworn statements by Dawn's parents, Karen and Edward Pasela, Kasaris not only threatened Dawn, but also showed up at their home as well. Kasaris claimed he needed to get inside their house to look for "computers." According to these same statements, Dawn spoke with Viola during the second trial, and her Mother Karen saw Dawn visibly crying and shaking when she was talking to Viola about the threats made by Dan Kasaris. Days later, with Viola's trial winding down, Dawn moved back to her apartment, but her Father Ed was worried because he hadn't heard from her, and because she did not appear in court as scheduled. When Ed went to Dawn's apartment and no one answered the door, the police were called for a welfare check. Moments later, six officers immediately arrived, opened the door, announced that Dawn was dead and prevented Mr.

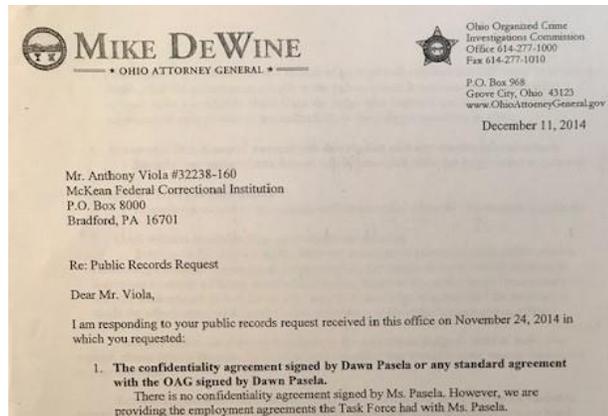
Pasela from entering the apartment or seeing Dawn's body. Only hours after her death and well before any toxicology report or the coroner's investigation commenced, Kasaris informed Judge Daniel Gaul, who presided over the second trial, that Dawn passed away from an "overdose", Ohio v. Viola, case # 10-cr-536877.

Although it hardly seemed to matter at that point, Viola was acquitted on all charges, prompting Judge Daniel Gaul to take the extraordinary step of stating that Viola is innocent, was wrongfully incarcerated, and that Kasaris committed "misconduct" throughout his case.

Cover up after Dawn's Death

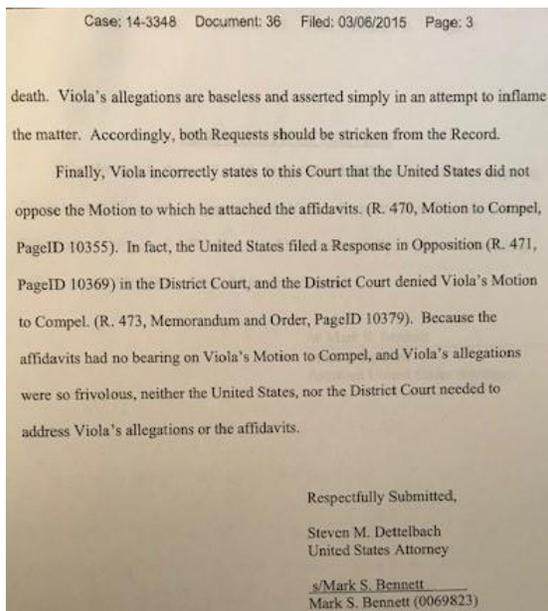
Not only was Edward Pasela prevented from viewing his daughter's body, the Coroner refused to allow family members to see Dawn after she was transported to the Coroner's Office. At the same time, Kasaris informed police Dawn had substance abuse issues and that her death should be treated simply as an overdose. In short, there was no need to conduct an extensive review of the case – especially since Kasaris never informed police and that Dawn was scheduled to testify as a witness in Viola's case. Dr. Dan Galita of the Cuyahoga Medical Examiner's Office said his office was never told Dawn was a witness in Viola's case, or that she wore a wire at the request of Bennett and Kasaris. At the funeral home, at a private viewing, family members noticed that Dawn's face did not look natural and may have shown signs of bruising or swelling. Yet even when Ripepi Funeral Home of Parma redid Dawn's make-up, it failed to conceal the marks on her face, a possible sign of a struggle.

Despite an acquittal on the same charges at the second trial, Viola remained in federal prison for a decade largely because U.S District Court Judge Donald Nugent refused multiple requests for a hearing so Viola could present – in federal court -- the same proof of innocence he utilized at his second trial in state court. Viola also requested – on multiple occasions and in numerous court filings -- an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding Pasela's death, but those requests were also denied. Undeterred, and also harboring doubts that Dawn's death was accidental, Viola and his private investigator, former FBI Agent Bob Friedrich, began obtaining documents and interviewing witnesses. The first big break in the case was a letter from the Ohio Attorney General stating that Dawn never signed – much violated – any 'confidentiality agreement' – completely disproving the basis for Kasaris' threats to imprison Dawn.



The Ohio Attorney General later confirmed that Dawn never Signed, much less Violated, any “Confidentiality Agreement.”

Around the same time, the Pasela family voiced their concerns in sworn statements provided to the then United States Attorney (and now head of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms) Steven Dettelbach, but Dettelbach stated in writing he would not look into allegations of misconduct, while Bennett asked the federal courts to strike the Pasela sworn statements from the court record, calling them “frivolous,” USA v. Viola, Case No. 14-3348, Document # 36. Despite Bennett’s efforts, both Karen and Edward Pasela continued to speak out; they hold prosecutors responsible for Dawn’s death and have repeatedly asked for “an entirely new investigation.”



Mark Bennett called statements by The Pasela family “Frivolous”



Steven Dettelbach (left) with Mark Bennett, who Received an award for Prosecuting Viola.

Marty Maurer’s Long Criminal Record, Ties to the Mortgage Business and Refusal to Answer Questions Creates Suspicion

At Dawn’s funeral, a former acquaintance and boyfriend, Marty Maurer, told the Pasela family that he loved Dawn and that he needed immediate access to her apartment, supposedly to place a teddy bear in her casket. Maurer – also during the funeral -- demanded to know when Dawn’s toxicology reports would be available. Maurer, likely a government informant with ties to the mortgage business as an employee of Oak Mortgage, was the last person to see Dawn alive, arriving shortly after Dawn’s folks left her place the night before she died. Maurer is suspected of having knowledge of what took place inside Dawn’s apartment. He has a lengthy criminal record but hasn’t spent time in prison and refused to cooperate with an investigation into Dawn’s death, a possible sign that he has been protected by law enforcement. To view Maurer’s extensive criminal record, please see Cuyahoga Heights Court Case # TRD 00131, Parma Case #15056346, Ohio v. Maurer, Cuyahoga County Case # 584579-14-cr and Case # 621527-17-cr, Brecksville Case # 200615038, North Royalton Mayor's Court case 17-01037, Broadview Heights case # 03-00522, Garfield Heights Muni Court TRC0607116B, Berea Muni Court case TRC06340, Ohio Highway Patrol, 2014 – DUI, Cleveland Muni Court cases 2020-TRD-010450, 2014-TRC-004276, and 2012-TRD-027407.

In 2016, Maurer’s Father died of a drug overdose in 2016, but Maurer – previously convicted of drug possession and living in the same house – was never questioned by the North Royalton, Ohio police about where his Father may have obtained drugs. Maurer lives in North Royalton, just blocks from the home of Daniel Kasaris, who was a city official at that time.



Marty Maurer, above, told Viola’s investigator Bob Friedrich, he had “moved on” and refused to answer any questions about Dawn Pasela or assist in any investigation.

Injustices and Prosecutorial Misconduct Feature Prominently in Criminal Cases prosecuted by Dan Kasaris

Courts of Appeals have frequently overturned convictions in cases prosecuted by Dan Kasaris, including Ohio v. Peter Beck, First Appellate District Court of Appeals Case No. C 150539 and the more recent decision by the 8th Ohio District Court of Appeals to overturn the conviction of Ken Mills in 2022. In September, 2023 a jury verdict in Ohio v. Keaton, Mahoning County, 2022 CRB 390, confirmed that Kasaris once again perpetrated a fraud on the court by presenting his latest girlfriend Kelly Connors as a “victim” and a “government witnesses” without disclosing the nature of his relationship with Connors to jurors, courts or defense counsel. In addition to a sexual relationship with Connors, Kasaris also maintains controls over her finances through a “Special Needs Trust” and has a Power of Attorney over Connors – additional facts that have never been disclosed to the defense or the Court. The nature of the Kasaris relationships with government witnesses in criminal trials is subject to ongoing litigation, please see Viola v. Kasaris, Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court Case No. CV-21-951041, Court of Appeals No. 23-112497.



Kelly Connors with Dan Kasaris. Kasaris maintains a power of attorney over her, and manages her financial affairs through a “Special Needs Trust” – without seeking permission from the Attorney General to engage in outside activities and without disclosing the nature of his relationship with Connors when she testifies in criminal cases.

The married Kasaris, who campaigns for elective office in North Royalton as a “family man,” makes little effort to conceal his affairs with government witnesses. Kasaris enjoys the limelight and frequently poses for Facebook photos with Connors. He previously entertained Clover baseball games, local bars in Downtown Cleveland, invited her to restaurants in nearby Lakewood and to his apartment in the Pine Forest Apartment

Complex in North Royalton. The humulation is often too much for Kasaris' wife Susan, who sometimes takes to Facebook to complain about Dan Kasaris' frequent affairs, his alcohol abuse and verbal assaults, including calling his own daughters "fat."

An Avalanche of New Evidence

While Viola was in prison, his investigative team obtained confirmation that FBI Agent Jeff Kassouf listened to the tapes Dawn made, promoting federal Judge Susan Paradise Baxter to order the FBI to produce these recordings. Agent Kassouf claimed he couldn't comply because he sent the recordings to the Task Force building and the FBI no longer possessed them. In the same litigation, the FBI claimed it was unaware of 10,000 records in the FBI records system and admitted making false statements about evidence in Viola's case, Viola v. US Department of Justice, et. al., 15-cv-242, W.D. Pa. As a result, Viola was released early from prison. He was immediately contacted by other mortgage fraud defendants prosecuted by the Task Force, who believed that the evidence presented at Viola's second trial likely exonerates them as well. What Bennett and Kasaris had tried to avoid for a decade was quickly becoming possible – dozens of defendants and attorneys working together to have their convictions vacated.

In 2020, the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office produced over 600 pages of Kasaris-Clover emails confirming their affair and that prosecutors committed a fraud on the Court by presenting Kathryn Clover as a "fact witness" when she testified in criminal cases. Prosecutors never disclosed the Kasaris-Clover affair or that Clover was actually an employee of the prosecutor's office who accessed and destroyed evidence in mortgage fraud cases. Covering up this affair creates a motive for foul play, as Dawn planned on sharing details of what she had observed between Clover and Kasaris.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, multiple individuals contacted Viola's investigative team to provide information about misconduct committed by Dan Kasaris and his illicit sexual relationships with government witnesses in criminal cases. These individuals also alleged they possessed recordings of Kasaris talking about Dawn's murder or knew about his role in her death, resulting in litigation to compel these individuals to provide evidence and share everything they knew about Kasaris' misconduct – and what happened to Dawn Pasela.

On June 2, 2022, evidence was presented in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court detailing a cover up concerning the circumstances surrounding Dawn's death, Viola v. Kasaris, et. al., Case No. CV-21-951041. At that hearing, witness testimony established that Kasaris brother John Patrick has frequently mentioned Dawn's "murder." Counsel for the Kasaris family, David Comstock, did not contest this claim but argued that Viola's legal work was frivolous and that state court is not the appropriate forum for his claims. Comstock also acknowledged that the statements in Viola's lawsuit were true, and conceded the documents presented in the litigation, including Kasaris-Clover emails,

Kasaris' wife Susan's Facebook messages complaining about his affair with Clover and Kasaris' threats to prosecute Dawn for violating a nonexistent "confidentiality agreement" were all authentic. Still, Comstock said he would not address any factual allegations because "Facts don't matter."



**Senior Reminger Partner and Attorney John Patrick
Stated that Dawn Pasela the victim of a "Murder"**

Viola argued that local attorneys are well aware of Kasaris misconduct and rampant sexual improprieties, but continue to assist him in avoiding any consequences. These lawyers include Jaye Schlachet, John Patrick and David Comstock, all of whom have conceded to the facts set forth in this article at an evidentiary hearing in the courtroom of Judge John P. O'Donnell, claimed they had no obligation to report misconduct by Kasaris because of Attorney-Client Privilege – a position adopted by Judge O'Donnell. Judge O'Donnell also refused to permit discovery or depositions, frustrating any efforts to obtain communications between Kasaris and others with knowledge of his affairs and his involvement in Dawn's death.

Government attorneys have joined in the cover up of misconduct by Kasaris. For instance, the United States Attorney's Office in Cleveland stated in writing that Clover committed perjury while testifying in criminal cases, USA v. Clover, 10-cr-75, Docket # 46, but no prosecutor has ever withdrawn her false testimony at criminal trials, preferring that innocent citizens remain imprisoned. Now, Viola argues in an appeal of Judge O'Donnell's rulings that the crime fraud exception applies to communications between an attorney and client which are "intended in some way to facilitate or to actively conceal a crime or fraud." Sutton v. Stevens Painton Corp., 193 Ohio App.3d 68, 96, 951 N.E.2d 91 (Ohio Ct. App. 2011). Courts have repeatedly held that attorney-client privilege may not be asserted to conceal an attorney's cooperation with the client's wrongdoing, and licensed attorneys are required to report misconduct and criminal activities of clients and other lawyers. Since attorneys are aware of the Kasaris-Clover affair, the Kasaris-Connors affair and the illegal undercover operation that led to the death of Dawn Pasela, and discussions about Dawn's "Murder," a court will now determine whether or not their actions are lawful

and whether or not these attorneys will face any consequences for covering up misconduct by Dan Kasaris. To review court filings, read the Kasaris-Clover emails, view Susan Kasaris' Facebook posts or read Kelly Connors' communications and other key documents, please see [Viola v. Kasaris](#), Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court Case No. CV-21-951041, Court of Appeals No. 23-112497, or visit the [FreeTonyViola.com Evidence Locker](#).

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(2) The issue of restitution still needs to be determined. However, the parties agreed in the written plea agreement that the loss caused to the lenders by Clover's fraudulent conduct exceeded \$1 million. Accordingly, Clover will have a substantial restitution amount to pay, and her probation should be continued to allow the Court to oversee her restitution;

(3) As this Court knows, Clover provided false testimony during the trial of this matter. Because of her false testimony, the government did not move for the full amount of 5K1.1 contemplated by the plea agreement and, as such, Clover's sentencing guideline range 15 to 21 months in Zone D, based on an offense level of 14 with a criminal history category of I. Accordingly, Clover should have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment. However, the Court granted defense's request for a further reduction of levels pursuant to 5K1.1 and placed Clover in a range and zone allowing for a sentence of probation. Clover has already been given an extremely favorable sentence and this Court should not give her the additional benefit of the early termination of her probation;



Mark Bennett acknowledged Kathryn Clover (right) committed Perjury in Federal Court, but he never moved to vacate Viola's conviction, as required by law.

Federal Prosecutor Mark Bennett Fired for Misconduct, Facing Disbarment

In 2020, Mark Bennett was fired by the Justice Department for serious misconduct and criminal activities and is currently undergoing disbarment proceedings, case number 2022-034; Department of Justice Inspector General Report Number 21-005, Ohio Supreme Court Case Number 2023-0471. According to the Inspector General, Bennett “physically and verbally harassed” women for two decades, demanded nude photos from colleagues, committed “sexual imposition”, insisted on “a sexual favor in exchange for a letter of recommendation” for an intern because he was excited about the “size” of her “buttocks.” Bennett was caught “deliberately running his arm across the breast,” of a colleague and purchased jewelry for married co-workers. Bennett also lied to investigators about utilizing a myriad of social media platforms to troll women on line – Bennett used Snapchat, Facebook messenger, Twitter, Skype messages and other means to solicit sex. Bennett falsely claimed he didn't log onto social media sites from his government computer, saying he “completely avoided those sites” because he feared his computer could be infected with

“viruses.” A forensic analysis of Bennett’s computer showed he logged into Facebook and Twitter “more than 25 times” and made a number of false statements to investigators.



Mark Bennett, above, at his June, 2023 disbarment hearing before the Ohio Supreme Court. According to the Justice Department, Bennett lied to investigators, used his government computer to solicit sex, lied about evidence in Viola’s criminal case, assaulted an intern, demanded sex from co-workers in exchange for a job, and abused his authority as a federal prosecutor to sexually harass women for over two decades.

In addition to the Inspector General Investigation, The FBI and Justice Department also blamed Mark Bennett for making material misrepresentations about evidence in the criminal cases, Viola v. U.S. Department of Justice, et. al., 15-cv-242, WD Pa, document numbers 99 and 164. Yale University Law School represents Viola in a case where Bennett concealed an affair between Kasaris and Clover, used Clover’s perjured testimony in criminal cases, and shifted exculpatory evidence before Viola's first trial from the US Attorney’s Office to a multi-jurisdictional task force location where Dawn was the Office Manager. This litigation also seeks an order compelling the government to provide the tapes made by Dawn while she was wearing a wire, along with any notes or evidence from those conversations, Viola v. Department of Justice, et. al., case number 22-2186, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

Trail of Death follows Dan Kasaris

The perfectly timed death of Dawn Pasela was not the only time Dan Kasaris benefitted from the death of someone closely involved in his prosecutions. Prior to the death of Dawn Pasela, Kasaris charged Shaker Heights, Ohio physician Bruce Feldman

with proscribing drugs illegally to patients with bogus health complaints, but failed to properly word an indictment that contained any criminal activities. Kasaris charged Dr. Feldman with 207 counts, but later was forced to admit he improperly worded charging documents. Later, Feldman supposedly jumped to his death off the Valley View bridge and landed nearly 200 feet below.

In 2020, Kasaris – an economic crimes and financial fraud prosecutor -- hired a publicist to help secure television appearances, including on the Oxygen Network, where he discussed the dismemberment of a murder victim's body found in a freezer. And in 2021, Kasaris' cousin, Francis Rydarowicz, was found guilty of stabbing his wife to death in 2019 at a hotel and was sentenced to 15 years to life in prison.

Missing computers and questionable voice recordings are recurring issues in cases prosecuted by Daniel Kasaris -- electronic records central in a corruption case against Cuyahoga County's former Information Technology lawyer Emily McNeeley allegedly disappeared from the county's internal computer network, while government witness Robert Harmon stated under oath that Kasaris directed him to manufacture fake voice recordings to assist Kasaris in his prosecution of Ronald Dudas.

Newly Obtained Evidence and Medical Examiner Records Raise Even More Questions about how Dawn was treated and about her death

For over a decade, prosecutors Mark Bennett and Dan Kasaris maintained that Dawn never had access to, nor could she have provided, any evidence to Tony Viola. However, those statements were proven false in 2022, when Task Force Chairman Donald Cleland stated under oath that he directed Dawn to remove hard drives from the Task Force that contained evidence in hundreds of state and federal criminal cases and bring that evidence to her apartment. Cleveland's sworn testimony not only bolsters the contention that investigating the disappearance of Dawn's computer is central to this case, but also proves that Bennett and Kasaris lied about Dawn's role at the Task Force. According to Mr. Cleland, Dawn was directed to

Wear a recording device to obtain information and to donate money from her checking account to [Viola]. She understood that the Task Force would reimburse her for the donation. ... Dawn was permitted by the Ohio Organized Crime Commission to take home with her a backup hard drive of the computer/server holding the files of the task force. The back-up hard drive contained confidential information and data on it. ... [Later,] The back-up hard drive could not be located."

The Cleland declaration also establishes that Dawn possessed key evidence at the exact same time that phone records and Facebook messages prove she was in communication with Tony about misconduct in his case.

In 2022, Viola met with Dr. Dan Galita, the physician at the Medical Examiner's Office who performed the autopsy on Dawn. Dr. Galita was unaware that Dawn wore a wire or was scheduled to testify – and said if he was aware of these facts, he would have noted them in his report. Dr. Galita pledged to reopen the case and change the cause of Dawn's death from "accidental overdose" to "Undetermined" if any law enforcement agency launched a new investigation or if the Parma Police turned their investigative file over to the Ohio Attorney General's Cold Case Unit.

Later in 2022, when Dawn's family authorized the release of additional records from the Medical Examiner's Office, Viola's investigative team learned that three cell phones were found at Dawn's apartment and that one showed an outbound made well after the stated time of her death. Newly obtained autopsy photos showed bruising on Dawn's neck and a broken necklace – likely indications of a struggle. And while the appearance of six officers for a welfare check always raised questions, new evidence showed that these same officers never called an ambulance to Dawn's apartment – instead, a mortuary service was summoned. Another newly obtained photograph has a picture of an energy drink – something Dawn didn't like, and that her parents didn't recall seeing when they left her apartment for the last time. All told, significant new evidence indicates that others were present in Dawn's apartment the night she died.



Dr. Dan Galita stated the Medical Examiner was unaware that Dawn was scheduled to testify around the time of her death, and that he would consider new evidence to reopen the case.

This new evidence – particularly outbound calls on the cell phone – created new uncertainty about the exact timing of death. Her parents saw her the evening before she died, yet when her body was found, Dawn was wearing the same clothes she had on the previous day. Responding officers reported advanced “lividity” when they discovered Dawn’s body, indicating she may have been dead for 18-24 hours before the police arrived. But photos showed the heat was cranked up in Dawn’s apartment while the window was open – a possible attempt to accelerate body decomposition. In order to believe the police findings, one must also believe that, as soon as Dawn’s parents left her apartment, Dawn immediately purchased several bottles of vodka, instantly guzzled herself to death and died – all in just a few hours on April 24 – but somehow also made a phone call eight hours later. But if Dawn passed away on the 24th, that’s closer to the time when Kasaris was present at or near Dawn’s apartment. And on April 25, the day Dawn’s body was discovered, public records obtained from the City of North Royalton confirm that Dan Kasaris disposed of his old computer and acquired a brand new one.

Given all of the new evidence in Dawn’s case, the Pasela family summarized all of it and made an appointment with the Parma, Ohio Police Department to formally request a new investigation into their daughter’s death. The police initially agreed to meet, but claimed they were not able to locate their own police reports from Dawn’s death. When the Pasela family replied that they possessed the report and would bring it to the meeting, the police later claimed that they, too, located these documents,

After a June, 2022 meeting, Parma Lieutenant Daniel Ciryak informed Ed and Karen Pasela that the City of Parma would turn Dawn’s file over to the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation’s Cold Case Unit and the Medical Examiner indicated they would change the cause of Dawn’s death to “undetermined” pending the new investigation. But the Parma Police never followed through – instead making various excuses as to why they had not acted, then stopped accepting calls from Dawn’s family.

**Attorney Kim Corral, Uncovered.com Lead the Efforts for a
New Investigation into what happened to Dawn, while the Actions
of the Parma Police Prompt Allegations of a Cover Up**

In early 2023, Attorney Kimberly Kendall Corral filed a petition to vacate Tony Viola’s federal conviction, based on the destruction of exculpatory evidence by prosecutors, use of coerced testimony and the undisclosed use of an “advocate witness” at trial, In re: Anthony Viola, Case No. 23-3050, Sixth Circuit. Ms. Corral also began assisting the Pasela family, and formally asked law enforcement agencies to re-open their investigation into what happened to Dawn. A review of the case by the Cuyahoga County Sheriff found that the Parma Police failed to collect any evidence from Dawn’s apartment. In fact, Parma Police failed to follow any procedures, interview any witnesses or investigate why Dawn’s computer -- with all of the Task Force’s evidence on it -- was

missing. Police also never “canvassed” the area, never obtained surveillance video and didn’t even bother to collect the three cell phones.

Despite a directive from the County Sheriff to investigate the case, and a statement by the Sheriff that they would pursue leads, Parma refused to take any action. And when the Medical Examiner was provided documents that the Sheriff suggested the case be reopened, they went back on their earlier pledge to change the cause of Dawn’s death. Instead, that office now stated that they would only change the cause of death after an investigation was concluded.

Later in 2023, in an unrecorded interview conducted by Parma Police Chief Joseph Bobak, Kasaris was questioned about Dawn’s death. While the contents of the interview are unknown, there is now a formal record that Kasaris was questioned, and if any false statements were made, that interview creates a basis for a perjury or obstruction of justice charge against Kasaris at a later date.

In 2023, after an exhaustive review of evidence, Uncovered.com, the nation’s largest database of cold cases, accepted Dawn’s case and is providing investigative resources and assistance, details at <https://uncovered.com/cases/dawn-pasela>. Uncovered also attracted media coverage of what happened to Dawn. All coverage of her death and the prosecution of Tony Viola can be found at www.FreeTonyViola.com/Press.



Dawn with her Father, Edward Pasela. Mr. Pasela Blames Dan Kasaris for the death of his daughter.

“Since we started investigating Dawn’s death, every single piece of evidence we’ve obtained supports the theory that her death was the result of foul play,” said Tony Viola. “In contrast, not one bit of evidence supports the contention that Dawn died from an accidental alcohol overdose. And aside from her death, we have an open and shut case of witness intimidation and obstruction of justice by law enforcement authorities. It’s long past time to hold Mark Bennett and Dan Kasaris responsible for their actions and it’s long

past time for responsible officials in the government to support our calls to fully investigate what happened to Dawn.”

Mrs. Karen Pasela, Dawn’s Mother, said “We went to the Parma Police well over a year ago in good faith and provided them with a great deal of evidence that required an investigation by the proper authorities. We provided city officials details about the theft of Dawn’s computer from her apartment, autopsy photos showing bruising on her neck and her broken necklace, transcripts detailing conversations about Dawn’s ‘murder’ and records that Dan Kasaris destroyed his own computer on the very the day Dawn died. In July of last year, the Parma Police promised to turn this file over to Ohio BCI’s Cold Case Unit, but gave us one excuse after another as to why that wasn’t done. Meanwhile, we continue to gather more and more new evidence, including the fact that the police called a mortuary service, not an ambulance, and new witness statements supporting our claims.”

Dawn’s Father, Mr. Edward Pasela, added: “The first thing Parma Police told us was that this case was above their pay grade and was too political because it involved prosecutors. If they felt that way, we hoped they would step aside and refer this case to another agency who could take a hard look at the facts, but the city refuses, leaving us with a cruel choice: either forget about our daughter or continue to seek a proper investigation into all that’s occurred. And we are going to do all we can to hold anyone who hurt our daughter accountable.”

If you have information or know anything about the death of Dawn Pasela, or about misconduct by Dan Kasaris or Mark Bennett, please contact Bob Friedrich at (440) 546-8393 or Bob@FAInvestigations.com, or Tony Viola at (330) 998-3290 or MrTonyViola@Icloud.com

For additional information about how Tony Viola proved his innocence at a second trial using evidence prosecutors said didn’t exist, please visit www.FreeTonyViola.com. The FreeTonyViola.com Evidence Locker contains all of the documents referenced in this article, including sworn statements from the Pasela family and 600 pages of emails between Dan Kasaris and Kathryn Clover.

To learn more about Dawn Pasela, or to submit a tip to her investigative team, please visit www.JusticeForDawn.com.

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