

# Arrest Made in 2010 Union Township Homicide



Nearly 17 months after she was discovered brutally murdered inside her Union Township home, the Union County Homicide Task Force has made an arrest in the stabbing death of Diane Mary Zaleski.

Zaleski, DOB 12-1-1955 was discovered inside her Laurana Road home in Union on November 18, 2010 by family members, said Prosecutor Theodore J. Romanow. Zaleski suffered multiple injuries in the attack that led to her death, according to a report from the Medical Examiner. The case had remained a priority for the Homicide Task Force, which continuously followed leads, reexamined evidence, and conducted more than 100 interviews.

Ultimately, it was an Internet conversation between the suspect and a friend that raised suspicions and led the friend to contact the Union County Homicide Task Force. Detective Robert Henderson and Assistant Prosecutor Caroline Lawlor followed the lead, traveled out of state and established that Arnell Yearwood DOB: 7-13-1985 was the primary suspect in the

Zaleski homicide.

“The friend did a search and came up with an item about Ms. Zaleski that detailed the crime,” said Romankow. “The friend then did the right thing and called this office.”

On Saturday, the New Jersey State Police helped the Task Force locate Yearwood and he was arrested as he left a Vauxhall Avenue house in Union Township, where he was removing carpets, said Romankow. Yearwood has family members who live on Laurana Road in Union Township, but he has lived at a number of addresses – mostly in Irvington – for the last several years.



It is not immediately clear if Ms. Zaleski knew Arnell Yearwood before she was murdered, said Romankow.

At the time of the homicide the Union County Sheriff's Department ID Unit recovered an abundance of evidence, including forensics samples that were forward to the Prosecutor's Office Forensics Laboratory for analysis. Those agencies working in cooperation played a key a role in Yearwood being charged today with felony murder.

In addition to the agencies already mentioned, Prosecutor Romankow also expressed his thanks to the FBI Behavioral

Analysis Unit, which provided a profile of the suspect late last year. Based on the current investigation, it appears the unit was very accurate.

He also thanked members of the Union Township Police Department who worked on the Task Force at the time of the homicide, along with other members of the department who provided assistance.

This is the second such cold case that the Task Force has resolved so far this month. Last week an arrested was made in the 1976 homicide of Westfield Lena Triano.

“Our detectives don’t give up,” said Romankow. “And based on the success rate the Task Force has built, there are criminals out there who should be very concerned. It’s only a matter of time.”

The Task Force has remained in constant contact with Zaleski’s family over the last 17 months. At the one-year anniversary of her death they released this statement:

“Diane was a loving and caring, daughter, sister, aunt, and friend to many. She had recently moved to the area to be closer to her elderly parents whom she helped care for. Her loss is felt every day by her family who is devastated and is seeking justice for Diane.”

Yearwood is being held at the Union Count Jail on \$1 million bail.

*These criminal charges are mere accusations.*

*The defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*