My fieldwork experience with

# THE LAKE COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

LGL251 – Fieldwork Presentation
Suzanne Baumruk





"We are dedicated to seeking justice with integrity by vigorously and ethically prosecuting criminal acts; acting with empathy and compassion for the victims of crime while observing unwavering respect for the rights of the accused; protecting the people of Lake County by working with our criminal justice partners to make our communities safer and fairer; and providing exceptional and professional legal representation to Lake County and its elected and appointed officials, thereby promoting responsible and trustworthy government."

Source: https://www.lcsao.org/27/About-Us



Eric Rinehart Lake County State's Attorney

ministrative Services vision

ecutive Division

ecialized Victims Unit

ild Support Division

ril Trial Division

ber Crimes Division

mestic Violence

ony Trial Division

ony Review

enile Justice Division

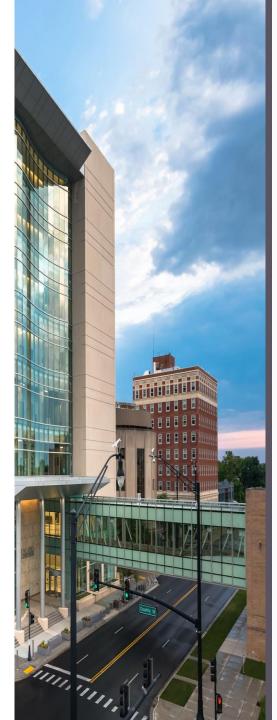
sdemeanor/Traffic

habilitative Services vision

ecial Investigations vision

tim Services Division

olent Crimes Unit



The Lake County State's Attorney's Office (LCSAO) is comprised of:

- Over 15 Divisions
- More than 140 employees

I completed my fieldwork assignment in Financial Crimes

- This previously fell under the Cyber/White Collar Crimes Division
- Newly designated as its own unit with recently approved additional funding from Lake County FY2024 Budget (11/20/2023 Press Release)
- Chief of the Financial Crimes unit, Assistant State's Attorney Kevin Berrill, was my direct supervisor for my fieldwork assignment



#### **Financial Crime**

#### Some examples:

- Fraud (check, credit card, loan, insurance, financial institution, payment)
- Theft
- Scams
- Embezzlement
- Money laundering

#### In the News...

LOCAL NEWS

# Lake Forest man accused of stealing \$500K from victims in Lake County found guilty in one of several cases



LMCS by Sam Borcia

Published February 3, 2023 4:17 PM

Click on these headlines to read about a recent financial crimes case prosecuted by my fieldwork supervisor!

#### Serial Scam Artist Ricky Dugo Sentenced To 8 Years In Plea Deal

Accused of stealing nearly \$1 million from four victims, Ricky Dugo pleaded guilty Friday to resolve all remaining charges against him.



Jonah Meadows, Patch Staff P

Posted Fri, Mar 24, 2023 at 4:40 pm CT | Updated Wed, Aug 23, 2023 at 2:35 pm CT

## **Assignment #1**

Reviewed over 150 pages of evidence pertaining to a case where an employee of a company is accused of defrauding customers

- Police reports
- Witness statements
- Bank records
- Emails and text messages

Created a spreadsheet to summarize the following for each of many victims

- Amount of net financial loss
- Evidence we currently have
- · My opinion regarding what evidence we still need to obtain

### Assignment #2

Reviewed evidence of multi-faceted case involving potential fraud by a business owner

- Police reports
- Witness statements
- Reports/tickets/violations from other governing authorities
- Invoices
- Bank records
- Emails and text messages
- Allegedly forged documents

Summarized the following for each of many victims

- Amount of net financial loss
- Evidence we currently have
- Evaluation of the strength of case







#### What I learned

- The detectives with the local police departments or the Lake County Sheriffs do the majority of the work gathering evidence, which they then provide to the SAO.
- The prosecutors must decide which cases to pursue based on the severity of the crimes and the strength of the evidence. All crimes cannot be pursued.
- Most cases end in a plea agreement. The SAO seeks fair and just punishment for a crime, not necessarily the most severe penalty.
- A more serious offense called "continuing financial crimes enterprise" is when a person knowingly, within an 18-month period, commits 3 or more separate offenses as defined by (720 ILCS 5/17-10.6)
- The class of felony depends upon the amount of money related to the crime (i.e. the higher the \$ amount, the higher the felony class, the higher the sentence range, the higher the fine, and the more strict the terms of probation).

#### IN SUMMARY





I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to work with the Lake County SAO office in the Financial Crimes unit. I learned a great deal and forged some great relationships!