

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Good afternoon everybody and welcome to today's webinar, Emmett Till Cold Case Investigation Program FY 2020 competitive grant announcement, hosted by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. At this time, I am going to turn it over to our first presenter.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: Good afternoon, my name is Elizabeth Griffith, also known as Betsy Griffith, and I work at the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Today, I'm going to be joined by my colleagues in the Department of Justice, including our Civil Rights Division, the FBI, and the Community Relations Service, to talk about other resources that we have available at the department to support this important work and they will be presenting later.

But to begin, we're going to be focusing on the details specific to this funding opportunity. Next slide. I wanted to give a quick overview of what we plan to cover, a little bit of background about the Bureau of Justice Assistance and our larger organization, the Office of Justice Programs, and talk a little bit about the funding opportunity, who's eligible to apply for the funding, and our requirements for the grant opportunity. I'll spend some time going through the specific application sections and then I will, as I mentioned, turn it over to my colleagues to talk about other resources that can support you in this important work that you're doing in the field. At the end, I will take a couple of minutes to just go through some of the top challenges that tend to come up when people are applying. A lot of this has to do with the technical process of applying in our [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) system as well as information that is critical for you to include in your grant application process so that if you do receive an award, we will be able to quickly process that award and get the resources to you. We will definitely make sure we have time at the end to allow you to ask questions. I will do my very best to answer all the questions I can today. If there are some things I'm not able to answer, we will also follow up with information that would be posted publicly through our Frequently Asked Questions on the BJA website and would also follow up as part of the information we provide when we post the slides and information from today's webinar.

So as I mentioned previously, this funding opportunity is being offered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, we also call ourselves BJA, and BJA is part of the Office of Justice Programs. I did want to take a moment, if you're not familiar with us, to share a little bit of information both about the Office of Justice Programs and BJA, and let you know that there are a number of different resources that can be available to you in the field to support your work. OJP is an entity that provides grant funding and we also support a lot of training and technical assistance to the field as well as conducting research and collecting statistics to be able to help you have a better sense of what is effective, to understand the nature and extent of issues, and to have a sense of trends and data that can support you both in putting together grant applications as well as having ideas on effective practices on issues that are facing you.

The Office of Justice Programs has two other organizations that we work with in the department that also provide similar kinds of support, particularly for grant making and training and technical assistance. In the area of violence against women, we have the Office on Violence Against Women, which also supports and addresses issues relating

to domestic violence as well as violence against women issues, sexual assault, rape, etc. Our Office on Community Oriented Policing Services often works closely with BJA to support a range of funding opportunities for law enforcement agencies, including resources for hiring and resources for equipment as well as supporting community-oriented policing activities.

BJA specifically focuses on the adult criminal justice system. We do this both through awarding and managing grants, and we do a lot of training and technical assistance. I wanted to share both our website, which is on the slide, as well as resources that are available through social media including Facebook and Twitter than can provide a lot of information. One thing I wanted to note again, we are right in the middle of our grant-making season, so we have a page up on our website that lists all of the open funding opportunities as well as other webinars that might be available to explain other solicitations that are open. The other thing I wanted to mention is if you have not applied for a grant with us before, we also have several webinars we did earlier in the year that have been recorded that walk you through the application process and help you think about what you need to do early in the process to make sure you're registered with the correct information and in our [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) system in order to be able to apply. And I would encourage you, again, if you've not applied with us in the past, to look at that information immediately because some things require a little bit of time to get you registered in our systems, and I want to make sure you have the opportunity to apply for this funding and not miss any of the deadlines related to getting registered. I'll cover a little more of that information at the end of the webinar.

This work that we're talking about today and we're extremely excited to announce this new opportunity, this is actually a new program for the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and BJA has really been focusing in recent years on supporting the administration's priorities to support activities that develop and sustain your work in the field to address violent crime. We recognize the important role that law enforcement and prosecutors play in addressing violent crime issues, as well as hate crimes, and supporting the needs of victims. As part of that, we recognize that there are often cold cases that have been around a longer period of time, that it can be difficult to leverage resources and expertise to support, and so we're very excited to have this funding available to support that work, and a couple of other related resources we have available at BJA to support this work.

So for this Emmett Till Cold Case Investigation Program, some of our objectives with this program are to help you enhance your collaboration locally, working with your state partners, working with your federal partners, and also with your tribal partners if it's relevant in your jurisdiction, to be able to investigate and prosecute unsolved civil rights cold case murder investigations. We really hope through this project that we will be able to increase the number of investigations and prosecutions that you are conducting and most importantly, that it results in bringing justice and assistance to families and stakeholders that have been impacted by these murders and hate crimes. We released this funding opportunity on March 4, and the post date for this opportunity is May 4. One key thing is there's pretty specific eligibility for this program, so if you do have questions, I'm happy to answer any of them. But the program specifically is available to state, local,

and tribal law enforcement agencies, and we define law enforcement as including prosecutor's offices that would be involved in the investigation and prosecution of these cases. This also includes tribal law enforcement who are a part of a federally recognized Indian tribe and those law enforcement agencies must perform law enforcement functions. A lot of the information about that eligibility is defined by the Secretary of the Interior. And in the funding announcement there is a link to more information if you have questions about that.

The other thing I would note is that if you do receive funding, both the entity that receives the funding as well as any subrecipients (which could include for-profit organizations) must forgo any profit or management fees. We would not be including those as allowable expenses in our award. We expect to make about six awards, potentially seven depending on the amount of funding requested. The maximum amount that you can request is \$300,000 to be performed over an approximately 24- to 36-month project period. So it's somewhere between two to three years. We have \$1.8 million this year to support these activities. We will be reviewing the applications, making our recommendations, and processing these grant awards with notification no later than the end of September 2020, and would expect that the grants would start on October 1. We recognize that there are some start-up activities and so we don't necessarily expect you to have a staff on the ground and ready to start working October 1, but it definitely is our goal to try to work with the applicants that are going to be selected to get any budget-related issues cleared as part of those awards, so that we can move as quickly as possible starting October 1 to implement these grants. Next slide.

Some of the allowable costs that we will support with this funding opportunity include resources to be able to support staff that you might need to hire relating to this work. It also can include costs associated with processing any kind of forensic evidence or other evidence. That would include anything relating to your crime scene, crime lab associated costs, and again, these are examples but if there's other costs that fall under processing evidence, we're not excluding those items, we're just trying to give you examples of the types of things that would be allowable. We also will support resources necessary to support expert testimony cases as well as costs for the preparation, investigation, and prosecution of the cases. So again, these are very broad categories and this is intended to be examples as opposed to only what we're listing here as being allowable. But if you do have specific questions on that, I'm happy to answer them.

We also recognize that in doing work and particularly with cold case investigations, sometimes it takes some time to be able to inventory and build the ability to track those cases to be able to support the investigation and prosecution of those cases. So you can also include those kinds of expenses in this work. Again, we recognize that these are much older cases and so there's a lot of back work you need to do sometimes to be able to pull what you need together to be able to pursue the investigation and prosecution of these cases. So we're intending to try and make these resources flexible to support those needs. As I mentioned earlier, it is a new program so we are, to some degree, learning with you. So, if things come up I want to hear from you all about what your needs are so that we can talk about any other requests that aren't considered.

As I mentioned earlier, a big goal or objective for this program is also to support those who have been impacted by these murders. And we really want to be able to ensure that in the work that we're doing that we're supporting the family members and other stakeholders who have been impacted by these cases. We recognize that they have suffered trauma and that oftentimes those of you who are involved in the investigation and prosecution of these cases may need support in understanding the impact of that trauma, and understanding it from a perspective of needing to think through when to notify family members if you have a case that you have some additional information about the methods by which you want to communicate that. If you're talking to witnesses who have undergone trauma that really has impacted how they're seeing or what information they can provide to you as potential witnesses in the case, that you have the subject matter expertise to be able to support and make sure that we're trying to mitigate any kind of re-traumatization for folks who have been through some very difficult things. And so, we will be working across BJA to be able to support and bring that expertise.

But if there are things that you can be including in your grant application, we really want to understand that and then as I alluded to earlier, we've got some terrific resources that our partners are going to talk about in a few minutes, including our Community Relation Service that can really support this work that you're doing. I'm very happy to mention that the solicitation does not require a match, so you do not need to do that but do keep in mind that if you want to contribute some match as part of this, we would certainly consider that as part of our funding opportunity. You would have to track those activities as part of your award should that be included in the application. Next slide.

So I just wanted to go over the basic sections that are in the application that you will need to complete and prepare as part of your application. Again, as I mentioned earlier, I really encourage you as a first step, if you haven't already, to take some time and read everything in the application and where you have questions there are links to our resource materials. We have a resource guide that you can walk through to understand all the things that are required as part of the application and also to get yourself registered in our systems to be able to apply. The key things you're going to need to fill out and complete as part of the application include the SF-424. This is a one-page sheet that summarizes who are you as an applicant and a little bit of information about your jurisdiction, as well as summary information about the amount of funding that you're requesting and other high-level information about your application. It's a form that you're going to have to fill out and answer all of the fields in that form. In addition, to help us have summary information that we would be using in the future for awards and in the review process, we ask you to prepare an abstract that summarizes what you're planning to do with your application. The solicitation outlines the information that we're looking for in the program abstract.

The core pieces of this application are the next two items. Your Program Narrative is really the substance of what you're planning to do with your program, and I'll talk about that a little bit more as we go through the different sections in the Program Narrative. But once you've figured out your process, this is where you will explain to us what you're proposing to do with your project. I will note that both the Program Narrative and

the budget information are required documents along with the Application for Federal Assistance, the SF-424. We'll do an initial review to make sure these basic minimum requirements are satisfied, and only those applications that include these three items will be moved forward for our external peer review process. So, it's really critical that you make sure you include at least these items. If the other items are also not included, that can affect the application process and our consideration of your application. So really we want all of this information but I wanted to emphasize the importance of those three items.

Item four is a Budget Detail Worksheet and a Narrative to support the worksheet, which outlines the specific requested items that you're seeking in terms of funding and it's broken out by different areas, such as staff that you're planning to hire and the related cost for them, and any contractual cost or subawards that you're planning to make. So there's a series of these different areas in the Budget Detail Worksheet. And so, you'll be filling out the worksheet and then providing a written narrative to explain the purpose for those budget items. I really encourage you to think about and make that connect with what you're proposing to do with your narrative. Sometimes we'll get a terrific narrative from somebody but then what they're asking for from the money perspective doesn't really connect. So, you want to make sure that what you're asking for financially connects to what you're proposing to do in terms of your program design and strategy, and that the narrative explains and connects how those costs relate to it. And also I urge you to make sure that the costs are reasonable in terms of the overall whole because those are the sorts of things that we're going to be looking at when we go through the application review process.

If it's relevant, if your organization does have an indirect cost rate agreement that allows for some other costs to be allocated, you would have to have an agreement approved and in place or at least pending with the federal government. Please make sure that you also attach that agreement if you're going to be requesting indirect costs as part of your application process. For Tribal Law Enforcement applicants, we would also require that an authorizing resolution be submitted. The purpose is to confirm that there is support from tribal leadership, from tribal counsel, for the application. I do a lot of work in Indian country and recognize that sometimes it can be difficult within short time periods to get a resolution signed. So even if you just have the draft and can sort of explain perhaps why counsel has not been able to meet and make a decision and sign off on the resolution, we will accept draft, although our preference obviously would be to have the signed resolution. If you submit a draft resolution and the application is accepted for funding, we would have to have the signed resolution prior to release of the funding.

Item seven is a questionnaire that gives us a sense of your financial management capabilities and the systems that you have in place to ensure internal controls that protect against audit findings that might come up and ensure good stewardship of the funding. So we have you go through and answer that questionnaire. And if you have not had grants previously with BJA there may be, for those of you that do receive funding, some additional training you'll have to undergo once the award is made. We also ask that you disclose information relating to any lobbying activities of your organization. Again, we need to be careful with regard to what you're doing in this work versus

lobbying activities. And so, there is a disclosure form we ask you to complete as part of the application process.

In the next slide I'm going to talk about a couple more attachments that we're requiring as part of this application. We recognize that 20 pages in the Program Narrative is not a lot of information. And so in addition, we ask that you give us a sense, generally--this is done not as narrative but maybe just an outline where we can look over your proposed project period of somewhere between two to three years. What do you think your steps are going to be? Talking about the activities and timeline for getting your project kicked off. Maybe any hiring you need to do. Any things you need to do to get your project in place. Things that you might then step into in terms of if you have not had the opportunity maybe to do some tracking and inventorying of cases that you want to pursue, pursuing those cases, and how that would flow in terms of your investigations and prosecutions. We also would want to see the resumes and/or job descriptions for key staff. We obviously recognize if you have not hired somebody what we then want to do is have a sense of what are the skills and abilities that you're expecting for the folks that you're going to be hiring under the solicitation. Again, if you're not planning to hire staff as part of this, then you would not need to include resumes or job descriptions.

As I mentioned previously, there are some other funding opportunities, including work that we do with cold case investigations under the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative, that also allow us to support cold case investigations. So if you've applied under the SAKI initiative as well as planning to apply under the Emmett Till opportunity, we just want to know, and we recognize there's no guarantee you get an application in both programs. And so if you want to submit the same application, you're certainly welcome to do so. But we just want to know both of those, so that we can de-conflict and make sure that we're not duplicate funding the same application under two different funding opportunities. Also, even if you have applied in one and the other, and maybe the activities are different, then just note that for us so that we can recognize that perhaps you need resources--you're trying to kind of cobble together several different funding opportunities that could potentially be coordinated and complement each other and that kind of gives us context to make decisions to say, "Oh, that's a little different of an application." So we may be able to consider those funding opportunities.

We don't necessarily expect a lot of this in this funding opportunity, but if you do want to partner with researchers or conduct evaluation activities to support the work you're doing, then there is an additional form that you need to complete that helps disclose information relating to your independence and integrity as it relates to research and evaluation activities. And then finally, and there is quite a bit of information in the application itself with regard to information about what's allowable for how much we're able to compensate employees. If you're seeking a waiver, you would have to put that into the application. And again, there's a lot more information available in the solicitation. Next slide.

I just wanted, as I mentioned before, to briefly outline the things we're looking for the abstract. As I mentioned, this is really supposed to be a high-level summary of what's put together in the more detailed abstract. So, we're looking for your name as the

applicant, the project title. We want you to briefly describe the cases that you're planning to address, including if there's any geographic or your jurisdictional, like where are you going to be targeting this work? How much funding you're requesting as part of it? Who your partners are going to be and how you're working together, if relevant? And what you hope to accomplish and what other resources you might bring to the program. As I mentioned, the Program Narrative can be no more than 20 pages and we have parameters around the formatting. Please do not exceed 20 pages. Again, I know it requires you all to be concise but we really want to give a level playing field to everybody. And if it runs longer than 20 pages, we may not be able to consider some of the information at the end that exceeds the 20-page limit. And that's also why we require the same formatting, so that everybody is basically given the same information.

I'm going to spend just a moment here on the scoring. As you can see, I have disclosed for you how we weigh each section in the Program Narrative as well as how we weigh the Budget and Budget Worksheets. And again that Budget Worksheet as well as some of the other attachments are not within that 20-page limit. It really is the description of the issue, the project design and implementation, capabilities and competencies, and plan for collecting data that should be included in the 20-page Program Narrative. You can see how we're weighing things. And so, again, I'm not saying collecting data is unimportant. We will be creating a set of performance measures and we've given you some sense of what we're going to be looking for. So, really, it's just you verifying you're going to be able to collect and report that data to us. The budget, we weigh it at about 10%. But you can see that really defining the issue in your jurisdiction and particularly the program design and the capabilities and competencies, what your organization can bring to ensure the successful implementation of this program. Those are the things that we're going to be putting the emphasis in the way we evaluate these applications. And so, in terms of the amount of information and amount of time you spend, I think really should be most concentrated on these first three sections. Next slide.

On the Budget Worksheets, we would like for you to itemize the budget for each year of the grant. So, what the form allows you to do is if you apply for two years of funding, you would provide funding for year one, year two, and then we'll also help you in the worksheet to aggregate to total costs. And so, the form is kind of self-explanatory. I will acknowledge it is not the easiest form to work for but it does help show you where you want to put that information and we do need the breakout for each year as well as the total. The only other thing I wanted to mention very briefly is if you have activities that are happening prior to the grant award, we cannot authorize any kind of retroactive. So it won't be until the award is made and the budget is clear, then ideally in most cases we'll be able to give you a full budget clearance with the award document. But until you get a full budget clearance, please know that you cannot expend funds and that we would not be able to reimburse you for those expenditures.

I spent some time talking through these and I definitely want to give some time to my colleagues to also be able to go through and talk about some of these other resources, but just quickly I've talked a little bit about the time and task plan previously but this gives a little bit more detail to you all. And again, these slides are going to be available online for you to be able to look through but our goal here is to make sure that we have

a sense earlier on, articulated in the narrative, what are your goals and objectives for this program. And then how will the major activities you're proposing accomplish those goals and objectives? And when do you expect them to be completed during the life of the grant and who's going to be responsible? Again, if you're applying on your own without other partners that would have responsibilities, that might just be one entity that would be articulated there. The other thing we definitely want to have a sense of is how many cases or programs, on a quarterly basis, do you expect to serve as part of this work? And, just trying to get a sense of how that's going to flow. Are you planning to work all the cases up front, are you planning to kind of parse them out over time. And then the only other thing I think we do need to have as part of this is that if you plan to have any subrecipients, we definitely need to have their names, their organizations, and the location of that organization. Next slide.

So at this point I'm going to turn it over to my colleague, Barbara, to talk through some of the resources that are also available in the department to be able to support the prosecution of cases that are approved under the Emmett Till Act, and she's also going to give a little bit more information about some of the history for the program.

BARBARA KAY BOSSERMAN: Thank you so much, Betsy. My name is Barbara Bosserman. I am the Deputy Chief of the Cold Case Unit of the Civil Rights Division's Criminal Section in the Department of Justice. And today I want to talk to you a little bit about the federal role in investigating and prosecuting civil rights era cold cases. Talk to you about the way Congress defined our mission under the Emmett Till Act and give you a few examples of both federal and state prosecutions. And end by talking a little about what support we can offer.

So the Emmett Till Act--the original act took effect in 2008 and was named after Emmett Till. As I'm sure many of you know, Emmett Till was an African-American youth who was killed in 1955 while visiting relatives in Money, Mississippi. He was abducted from the home of his relatives and his body, mangled, beaten, bloated, was later found in the Tallahatchie River. This was not a who done it. Till had several days earlier whistled at a white woman in a store and suspicion quickly fell on her husband and brother-in-law. And they were indicted and tried in state court. An all-white jury acquitted despite overwhelming evidence in a very short period of time and Emmett Till's death became one of the first catalysts for trying to advocate for stronger hate crime laws and in particular federal hate crime laws. And in the decades after his murder, several federal hate crime statutes were enacted.

Now in 2007, 2008, Congress recognized that while those statutes gave federal prosecutors tools to deal with crimes that were occurring, there were many crimes from the Jim Crow era that had gone unvindicated, unsolved, and so Congress in passing the act named for Mr. Till asked that the Department of Justice focus on these cases and the department was already doing so. It had begun its own cold case initiative in 2006. But what Congress required us to do under the original Till Act was to recognize the importance of unsolved, racially motivated murders, and required us to look at any unsolved civil rights murder that occurred before 1970, up to and including December 31, 1969. Congress encouraged us to look at these cases even if federal prosecution

was unavailable. And I'm going to explain to you in a minute that there are some reasons that often cases cannot be prosecuted federally but can be prosecuted in the state courts, and so Congress asked that we still look into these cases with the idea that we could refer them to our state and local counterparts after we investigated them.

The Till Act also was reauthorized in 2016 and the reauthorization extended the group of cold cases that we needed to look at up through 1980. So under the current Till Act we are to look at unsolved, unvindicated civil rights murders that occurred up to and including December 31, 1979. And the reauthorization also required that we meet regularly with stakeholders. Many cases are referred to us by stakeholders, and when I say stakeholders I mean civil rights organizations, academic institutions with an interest in cold case work, and most of our cases are referred to us that way but we also accept referrals from the families of victims and from state and local law enforcement. If you have a Till Act case we want to know about it. When we talk about the Till Act case we're not talking about just any cold case. I know the term can sometimes be used in common parlance to mean sort of any old, unsolved case, but under the Till Act what we are looking at, at DOJ, is first of all a case that resulted in death. So we're not looking at old assaults, we're not looking at old unsolved rapes. We're not looking at attempted murders. We're looking at death-resulting cases. In addition, for us to look at it under the Cold Case Act, there has to be evidence that the death was the result of a civil rights crime.

This act was named for Mr. Till and they're looking for cases like Mr. Till's murder, where somebody was murdered because of their race or some other factor and that crime has gone unvindicated. Race is the most typical because of the history of America and what happened in the Jim Crow South, but that is not an absolute requirement and is certainly not an absolute requirement that the death be because someone was African-American. If someone was killed because they were Native American or Hispanic, that would fall under the Till Act. If someone were killed because of their religion, for example, someone was killed because they were Jewish, that would be a civil rights basis for a crime and that would fall under the Till Act. If someone was killed during a slavery or involuntary servitude offense, slavery and involuntary servitude or civil rights crime, that would qualify. So those are the kinds of cases that we are looking at.

And as I said, we are excited about this opportunity. We are excited to have funding available for state and local governments to be able to investigate and prosecute these cases because we are often unable to prosecute these cases federally. I think most folks on the call probably know that the federal government doesn't have a general murder statute. We could only prosecute a murder if there's some kind of statute that gives us federal jurisdiction, like murder on federal land, we can prosecute. And with current hate crimes, we can prosecute a murder that was the result of a federal hate crime. Unfortunately, the first federal hate crimes were enacted in 1968, so we can't properly execute many cases that occurred before then because we don't have a statute available. Also, initially all of the federal hate crimes had very short statutes of limitations, which is a deadline, I'm sure most of you know, for when you can bring a case from the time, you only have a certain number of years. And when hate crime laws

were initially passed, you only had five years to prosecute a case and if you didn't do it in five years the statute of limitations had expired. So many of these cases, the federal statute of limitations has expired, but you all might be able to prosecute these cases under your general murder statutes. Now that being said, that doesn't mean we had no success and I want to talk to you about a couple of cases because I think they'll give you an example of the kind of cases that we're looking at and the kind of cases that can be prosecuted and investigated under the Till Act.

In 2003, Ernest Avants was successfully prosecuted in federal court. Avants was a Klansman and he and his fellow Klansmen in Mississippi killed an African-American farmer named Ben Chester White. Their plan was to murder White in order to lure Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Mississippi so they could assassinate him. That second part didn't work out. Dr. King did not go to Mississippi, but unfortunately they did murder Ben Chester White. It was determined that Mr. White had been killed on federal land, so we were able to prosecute Avants, the only surviving Klansman involved in the murder in 2003. That was a joint effort between my office, the Civil Rights Division, and the Assistant United States Attorney in Mississippi. In 2007, there was a successful prosecution of James Ford Seale. Seale and his co-defendants murdered two African-American men, Henry Dee and Charles Moore. They mistakenly, and without really any evidence or whatsoever, believed that Dee and Moore were members of the Black Panther organization. They believed that only because of the color of their skin, they were both African-American. They abducted the men and they murdered them and threw them in a river. And it was later determined that during the abduction they crossed state lines, so we were able to prosecute the case as a federal kidnapping case. In addition, the State of Alabama was able to prosecute, in 2000, Thomas Edwin Blanton and Bobby Frank Cherry for their roles in the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. That was a bomb that went off on a peaceful Sunday morning, killing four little girls, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson, Denise McNair, and Addie Mae Collins, and those little girls were killed in a blast that shocked the nation. They had a co-defendant who was prosecuted in 1977, which was more than a decade after the bombing, but the two of them were not brought to justice until the early 2000s.

In 2005, the State of Mississippi, prosecutors in Mississippi prosecuted Edgar Ray Killen, who had been involved in one of the most infamous civil rights crimes portrayed in the movie Mississippi Burning, in which three Civil Rights workers, James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Mickey Schwerner, who were in Mississippi during Freedom Summer to register voters and be engaged in other civil rights work, were murdered by combined forces of deputy sheriffs from the Sheriff's Office and Klansmen, and Mr. Killen was actually tried for civil rights crimes in the '60s but the jury hung on him. Seven people involved in that crime were convicted but Killen, the jury, well, hung on him and Mississippi was able to try him in 2005 and achieved a conviction. And then in 2010, James Bonard Fowler pleaded guilty to manslaughter in connection with the death of Jimmie Lee Jackson. Fowler was a state trooper who shot Mr. Jackson during a civil rights protest, and some of you may know that it was Jimmie Lee Jackson's death that was one of the catalysts for the very famous civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. So in 2010, there was a conviction there. So, those are examples of the kind of cases where defendants have been brought to justice decades

after the original crime. Some of these are very famous cases. Your case doesn't have to be a famous case to fall under the Till Act. We're interested in these cases, any Civil Rights era murder. We are interested in, we would love to know about any cases that you're involved in doing. If they are federally prosecutable, most of them will not be, we can talk about whether it makes sense to bring a case federally. We can also talk to prosecutors and give them the benefit of our expertise in these cases. But in addition, and I think more importantly for you all, the FBI has a lot of great resources and I'm going to turn this over to Agent Randy Gonzalez to talk a little bit about what those FBI resources are. So Randy, you want to tell the folks a little bit about the FBI's role.

RANDY GONZALEZ: Okay. Thank you. As I said, I'm with the FBI. I'm a Supervisory Special Agent in the Civil Rights Unit. The Civil Rights Unit manages all of the cases under the Emmett Till Act. So you already heard basically how to apply for the grant, you've heard from Barbara which cases fit within the definition of the Emmett Till Act, and now I'm going to talk to you about resources. Our resources will be available to you or your department to actually investigate these crimes. But I want to make a little caveat--if you have some unsolved cases, cold cases that do not fit within the act, we still would like to know about it. Please gather my contact information, it should be on the screen, and let us know. We have other resources for cold cases, but we do have a little more leverage if the cases fall within the Till Act because we're basically mandated by Congress. So, I want to leave you with that.

Let me tell you about the resources I'm talking about. First will be manpower. I will make sure if you get a Till Act case that we have special agents in the FBI office in your area to be assigned to the case to investigate because of majority of the departments, we have all the resources of the FBI lab, FBI Quantico. They will provide all analysis or biometric analysis involving DNA, fingerprints, all the scientific analysis involving firearms, ballistics, toolmark analysis, trace evidence, all that stuff will be available to you. And also, digital enhancement photographs. If you have a crime scene and you have photos and you want those digitized, we can do that. And two more things. We have the Behavioral Analysis Unit. They will provide crime scene analysis, profile of all known offenders who have been very popular, and interview interrogation strategies for known offenders if you need those. And finally, our newest tool is the forensic genetic genealogy. This is something new we're using, it's basically utilizing genetic material to identify relatives of offenders. And over the past two years, over a hundred cold cases have been solved using FGG, as we call it. One high-profile case is the Golden State Killer you may have heard about. So, about FGG, it requires much less DNA material than your regular submission to CODIS. So you may have evidence within your files that were processed for DNA material and was not sufficient for CODIS but may be sufficient for FGG. So keep that in mind, basically it's your system. They will be able to provide investigative leads, basically by determining if somebody is a relative, a distant or close relative of the suspect, and to give an example, if I would say I know the person who committed the crime is an uncle or a second-tier uncle or cousin of Michelle, our host, you would know to investigate because you know Michelle, you know to investigate her family members and that's how you get your suspect. So, to summarize

it quickly, we provide staffing, FBI lab resources, Behavioral Analysis Unit, and FGG. That's all I have for you, thank you.

GERRI RATLIFF: Hi, this is Gerri Ratliff. I am the Deputy Director of the Community Relations Service. For those of you who many not have heard of us, we are a very small component of the department and we have field offices across the United States, so it's possible that you have worked with us in the past. We have been in existence for over 50 years, working with not just law enforcement but also community groups of all kinds. Starting in the 1960s under the Civil Rights Act, we began supporting community groups and law enforcement entities, working to reduce tensions and conflicts related to race, color, and national origin. So, of course, those cases squarely map often to the Emmett Till kinds of cases that are the subject of our webinar today. Then in 2009, under the Hate Crime Prevention Act, our jurisdiction to support communities and law enforcement expanded to include religion, as Barbara mentioned, that can be relevant for an Emmett Till Case; also disability status, gender, LGBTQ status. So, we have been for many, many years supporting communities and law enforcement just working to respond to hate crimes and try to reduce tensions that can arise as a result.

The types of community groups we work with include not just law enforcement but also Civil Rights groups; federal, state, and local officials; schools; faith-based groups; anything at the group level, so we don't get involved in individual disputes. But when tensions arise to the level of community groups feeling these conflicts and tensions, we can get involved where appropriate and support work that's being done to try to address and reduce those tensions. It's always important to mention our services are free. They're voluntary, so we don't have any authority to come in and say, "We're here, we're going to help you. You've got to accept our help." We come in where you think it might be useful and we are in an impartial role so we never come in with an eye for judgment, investigation, or prosecution. We are neutral and work with all the involved parties equally to address tensions and help the parties move forward. Our work is confidential, so if there are discussions that occur with us we do not reveal the content of those discussions without permission.

So, our work can apply to the Emmett Till case context. For example, if you are supporting under this grant, or even not under this grant, work that relates to the Emmett Till Act, if you find that community groups are reacting with tension, if there's conflict, and often this would stem, of course, from historical tensions, deeply rooted historical tensions that have been there for a long time, and even perceptions. So, it's enough that groups feel like there's been past injustices. We don't even care if there has been or not. But if there's a perception, then that's enough to invoke our jurisdiction. And we can come in and help you--again, if you would find it helpful, it's only if you are requesting it. We can help you set up meetings with the community groups. We can be that neutral third party kind of performing the process role in the background to facilitate discussions, and it's very helpful when there are these kinds of tensions to have a neutral third party who can say just keep the discussion moving forward.

So you can see on the slide the types of services we offer fall into these four broad categories, and not all of them really apply to our context for today, but facilitation

certainly does. We can, like I said, help convene and facilitate dialogue when that would be appropriate. That's often helpful for information sharing. If groups are saying, "Wait a minute. We hear rumors that there's a case being investigated, one of these historic civil rights cases. What's going on?" Or if there's no trust, sometimes just historically. There's no trust between community groups and law enforcement. But when law enforcement often would like to tackle that head on and say, "Let's talk about that. Let's work on that and build trust." We can help with that whether through just information sharing, helping set up sessions that are more geared toward action planning, sometimes communities would like to focus on, "Okay, what can we do as a community together, what specific actions would we like to take to move forward and deal with these historic tensions?" and address them and make it better.

So, that all falls into what we could help support you doing if you think that would be helpful. We also help conduct formal mediation, that probably wouldn't apply in an Emmett Till case. We do trainings, again, probably not applicable, but we do have information on our website about training that we have for law enforcement to build trust with certain vulnerable groups, Muslim-Americans, Sikh-Americans, and transgender Americans. And then, consultation, we can just talk to you if you're like. "You know what, I don't know if we really want any community sessions, but we'd like to talk to CRS just to brainstorm." We can share our best practices and our ideas. And again, this is free and confidential, and only if you would request it and find it helpful. This slide shows you what we call our service areas for purposes of today. We'll be looking at Administration of Justice, so those are cases that involve law enforcement. It doesn't mean law enforcement is a party, in other words. This could involve an allegation of excessive use of force. But it also just involves situations where the police are involved. It's a police matter that we can help with.

So, hate crimes, Emmett Till cases, that falls under the Administration of Justice service area. We do a lot of work with schools. If you, whether in an Emmett Till kind of case or anything, any work that you do, find that it would be helpful for us to support you and work through some tensions and conflicts at schools, we can do that as well. So, this slide gives you a sense of our work, that much of our cases involve law enforcement issues, schools, and then general community relations is just the other bucket of work that we can do to support community groups attempting to reduce tensions and prevent and respond to hate crimes.

Finally, this is a slide that shows where our 14 field offices are. So we basically cover the country. You can see the little--what do you call that, the teardrop? Each teardrop shows you where one of our offices is located. We are small, and so each of those offices has just a handful of people. And then we have a group of people here in DC. But you can see the jurisdictions that each office covers. In some regions, we also have a second office that we call a field office. And if you think that we can support you, whether or not you receive funding under this grant, whether or not you get involved in an Emmett Till case, if you are involved in a tension or conflict that you think we can help you with, reach out to us. During this current coronavirus quarantine, so to speak, we are working virtually, so there's obviously some annotations but we have been able to offer virtual services convening some conference calls with groups and having some

dialogues just through webinars and conference calls. And then we will get past this and get back out, of course, in the field doing face-to-face work. So you can email, you can see here at the bottom of the slide, askCRS@usdoj.gov, and you will be directed to the contact information for the regional or field office that is in your area. So with that I'm going to turn it over to Betsy and look forward to any questions.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: I'm going to go extremely quickly through these. But before I do this, if you do have any questions you'd like to ask, we definitely want to make time for that. As mentioned earlier in the presentation, you can submit your questions using the Q&A function. And so, if you have questions now, put them in there so that we can queue them up and start to answer in just a moment. The next couple of slides outline some of the areas where we tend to see errors that occur that could either affect consideration of your application or would delay access to funding, if you were to be receiving an award from us.

As I mentioned earlier, completion of the general application form, which is the SF-424, is absolutely critical. And we want to make sure that you look closely at that and include all of the information that's required in here. In addition, there are several things that you need to do to get your organization registered if you have not in the past, including the SAM registration, to make sure that your legal entity has been registered in our [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) process, and it will require you to be able to provide information about the legal aspects of your organization, including what we call our DUNS number. So, make sure you've gone ahead and reviewed the application in a lot of detail, gone through the registration to get yourself sort of preregistered to apply in [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). The other thing that I find will happen here is you'll assume that the registration is up to date or that you had the correct person registered. So, also verify all that information because what we don't want to have happen is perhaps somebody left and then you're applying late in the process and you realized that person's left and you've got to update that information. And again, there's kind of a week or two sometimes for that information to get updated. So just make sure all of that is registered upfront. And then finally, make sure that on the 424 you have listed the correct authorized representative. That is the official with the authority to sign and accept the grant agreement on behalf of your organization, which could be the head of the police department, the head prosecutor, or the highest elected official in the applicant agency. And then--next slide, please.

I want to encourage you to look through the tips that I've listed here and spend some time early in the process to review them. And if you have specific questions, we can certainly cover that in the Q&A. If you go to the BJA website, there's a couple of great webinars that can help you walk through the technical aspects of applying through the federal [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) process and all the things you need to think about relating to that. Take a look at these tips. These are the areas where we tend to have issues. But I think what I want to do is turn it over to you in just a moment, Mary Jo, to walk through other online resources that we have available if questions are going to come up with regard to the application process. But before I do that, I want to mention a couple of other things.

Similar to what Barbara covered with regard to the cases that can be taken at the federal level, this funding opportunity focuses specifically on cases authorized under the

Emmett Till Act, which are cases that occurred December 31, 1979 or prior. Again, it does have to be a murder that occurred and there has to be a Civil Rights nexus. We noted some of those nexuses to be race, they could be religion, those types of things. And I do want to connect this and say that if there are tribal law enforcement entities on the line today, we recognize at the department the critical issue of missing and murdered indigenous persons and this funding opportunity could really help you with the cold case murder investigation aspect of that issue. So we worked very hard to make sure that you were part of the eligible entities that would be part of this opportunity. The other thing I wanted to mention, as I alluded earlier, we've got a slide later in the process that talks about other BJA resources under our Sexual Assault Kit Initiative. We also will often have sexual assaults that result in a murder and the SAKI resources are available to you to support these kinds of activity and are not limited to just those cases that occurred prior to 1980. They're authorized under Emmett Till, so that's another funding opportunity.

And then there's also some resources that we're managing in conjunction with the National Institute of Justice to also clear other kinds of cold case investigations. So, I encourage you to take a look at any of those resources and if you have questions, please let us know. We're happy to answer them and my contact information will be at the end. The SAKI program also has a terrific training and technical assistance website and a lot of good information that provides you with advice generally on investigating cold cases that could be relative to this work. So I would encourage you to also access those resources and think about that. And then I wanted to reiterate the points that were made earlier, in terms of the FBI resources, to say that the FBI has been a terrific partner in working with us and state and local tribal jurisdictions to bring technical expertise and really connect the dots. And we've been able, in our work with the FBI, to resolve a number of cases relating to serial murders. And so, I think there's really good resources available to support you right now. So if you have questions, please feel free to reach out and contact me. And Mary Jo, I want to turn it over to you.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Thank you, Betsy. I want to let everybody know that Michelle has added the links that are on the slides for the BJA Cold Case Investigation Resources. She has put those links into the chat box and you have the ability to copy and paste those into a Word file. And again, as a reminder, these slides and a transcript will be posted to the BJA website in about a week. As Betsy mentioned, there are some resources that we want to go over before we get into the questions. [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) is available to you if you have any problems uploading or submitting your application, attaching files, and so forth. You can reach their Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035. They are also available via email at support@grants.gov. They are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, but they are closed on federal holidays. And then lastly, there's the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. You can email them if you have any questions about this opportunity. And they will work with Betsy to get an answer to you. They are available 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and until 8 p.m. on the application closing date. You may call them at 800-851-3420, or email them at grants@ncjrs.gov. They also have a web chat feature and that is available. The URL is listed here on the slide. You can also get that by going to their website, www.ncjrs.gov. We also encourage you to subscribe to their JustInfo

Newsletter and the Funding Newsletter from NCJRS. JustInfo comes out twice a month and the Funding Newsletter comes out every Friday. The Funding Newsletter will announce new opportunities for funding from all agencies within the Office of Justice Programs. It will notify you when there are webinars such as this one and when items from the webinars have been posted to the appropriate agency website. As Betsy mentioned, her contact information is listed here and it is on the slide that's showing now. So we only have a couple of questions. I will start reading those out so that they can be answered. I do encourage you, if you have any questions, to please submit them today. It's a great way to have an immediate answer and hear right from Betsy. Could a Conviction Integrity Unit be eligible to apply like that of Leo Frank?

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: So, it really would depend on where the unit is located. The authorizing legislation for this program for BJA is pretty specific. It has to be a law enforcement agency which, again, we will try and get interpreted as broadly as possible. Again, the eligibility is specifically state and local law enforcement, but we work with general counsel to ensure that also includes prosecutor's offices. So if the Conviction Integrity Unit is located in a prosecutor's office, you would be eligible to apply. If it is a nonprofit organization, I would encourage you to consider forming a partnership with perhaps a law enforcement or prosecution agency that you've been working with to serve as the lead and then to be able to partner with that nonprofit to do the work.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And Betsy, just to follow up, it is with a prosecutor's office.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: Yes. Then if you're a prosecutor's office, you're definitely eligible to apply.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: The next question, "I was already funded for SAKI. Then, should we apply? We don't want Emmett Till funding to hurt our SAKI funding."

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: I don't think there is any concern with doing that. What I would encourage you to do is in the section on disclosure of applications, just to disclose that you have applied and maybe provide some basic information about the difference between the applications. We recognize that there, for example, are going to be potentially cold case murder investigations that don't involve a sexual assault but may involve a civil rights violation that occurred during the appropriate time period that we've talked about today. So, I think as long as you're able, you should be clear in the application to distinguish what you're focusing on. And I work closely with Angela Williamson in the SAKI program to coordinate those applications. But we recognize, as I said earlier, that oftentimes you all are having to kind of cobble the resources together within the parameters of our funding authority, and we want to try and make that as seamless as possible. So I would really encourage you to consider applying for both but just make sure that you're not asking for the same resources in both opportunities.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: That's all the questions that we have at this time. We can give the individuals another minute to see if anybody has anything that comes to mind. In the meantime, we can talk about NCJRS again. They are available after this webinar if you do think of a question that you are unable to ask today. You can submit that to

grants@ncjrs and they will reach out to Betsy and work with her to get an answer to you.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: Mary Jo, can you go back one slide? I want to go over one piece. I finally got the functionally on my computer, so bear with me. Go back one more slide than this onto the resources. Okay. So on the cold case resource investigation, you can see the SAKI TTA organization that talks a little bit about the SAKI program. We also have recently released a publication generally around strengthening homicide investigations, which also includes some tips for being able to pursue this. This is broader than the Emmett Till-specific cases, it's just general strategies around pursuing homicide investigations, which would include cold cases, so those are some resources you may want to consider. In addition, I did want to reference the cold case overall information. This is a terrific website that our federal partners who have presented today have put together on generally all the resources that are out there and available to you if you're pursuing these kinds of cases. And so, I also wanted to refer to that as an opportunity. And again, we'll make these slides available. But I think there's some really good online information that you may want to look at as you're putting your application together.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: We did not receive any other questions during that time. So, if you want to give individuals another minute or if you want to end the webinar.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: I think I'm good. And I really appreciate everybody taking the time, and we're looking forward to seeing your applications and hopefully having an opportunity to work together in the future. And again, I really want to thank my colleagues across the department. They have been doing this work for over a decade now and there is a tremendous team that can be there to support us across the country. These are not the easiest cases to pursue. And please know that we're here to support you in this work and if you have other questions, please us know.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Thank you, everybody.