Breakthrough in 2007 Troup County cold case, partial remains found in bag identified

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Troup County
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TROUP COUNTY, Ga. - After 16 years, the Troup County Sheriff's Office has made a breakthrough in a cold case dating back to 2007. On the morning of Dec. 6, 2007, deputies responded to reports of a suspicious burning black bag at the intersection of Whitfield Road and Stitcher Road. Upon arrival, they discovered partial human remains, missing hands, feet, and head. The remains were sent to Georgia Bureau of Investigation's Crime Lab, where it was determined that the case was an obvious homicide involving an unidentified adult Black female. Despite extensive efforts, the case eventually went cold, with no substantial leads or identification.

In early 2023, a review of cold cases prompted authorities to reexamine this particular case. DNA from the remains was sent to Innovative Forensic Investigations in Emporia, Virginia, and Gene by Gene Laboratories in Houston, Texas, for DNA analysis and genetic genealogy forensics. The results were then sent to the GBI crime lab for comparison.

On Dec. 13, the Troup County Sheriff's Office received confirmation of a positive DNA match. The victim was identified as Nicole Alston, who was 24 years old at the time and last known to reside in Manhattan, New York. Investigators spoke with family members who confirmed that Nicole moved to the Atlanta area in July 2006, and they had not heard from her since.

With the victim's identity now known, the Troup County Criminal Investigators will continue their efforts to move forward with the homicide investigation. The Sheriff's Office expressed appreciation to Innovative Forensic Investigations, Gene by Gene Laboratories, and the GBI for their assistance in solving this 16-year-old case.

Anyone with information about the case is encouraged to contact the Criminal Investigation Division at 706-883-1616 or Crime Stoppers at 706-812-1000.