

Remains of 18-year-old found in Wilkinsburg basement in 1999 finally identified

1999 REMAINS IDENTIFIED

- ▶ Genelle Bradford, 18
- ▶ April 1999
Reported Missing
- ▶ June 1999
Body Found
Home On North Avenue
- ▶ Homicide
- ▶ No Suspects Identified

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WILKINSBURG, Pa. —

An 18-year-old woman whose remains were found in a Wilkinsburg basement in 1999 has finally been identified.

The Discovery

On June 28, 1999, the new owner of a home on North Avenue in Wilkinsburg discovered the remains of a woman in their basement.

Prior to the discovery, the home had sat empty and abandoned for more than a year.

The Allegheny County Medical Examiner ruled the woman's death a homicide by ligature strangulation and it was estimated she was between 18 and 20 years old.

Since her death in 1999, the Allegheny County Police Department's Homicide Unit, Wilkesburg Police, and the Allegheny County Office of the Medical Examiner worked to identify Jane Doe.

With the help of a grant, police and the Medical Examiner's Office were able to partner with Othram in 2024 on the case and a dozen others.

Identifying Jane Doe

Othram, a corporation that specializes in forensic genetic genealogy, was able to build a DNA profile of the remains and find potential family members of Jane Doe.

Through that, Othram identified the woman as 18-year-old Genelle Bradford. Bradford was reported missing from Wilkesburg on April 24, 1999.

"We are thrilled that once again this partnership has allowed us to provide answers to a family that was left in the dark for so long," said Mandy Tinkey, Director of Forensic Services at the Allegheny County Office of the Medical Examiner. "While the focus now shifts towards finding justice for Genelle, we are hopeful we can continue to provide answers for those impacted by the remaining cold cases we have shared with Othram."

Authorities say they have not been able to identify a suspect in Bradford's death.