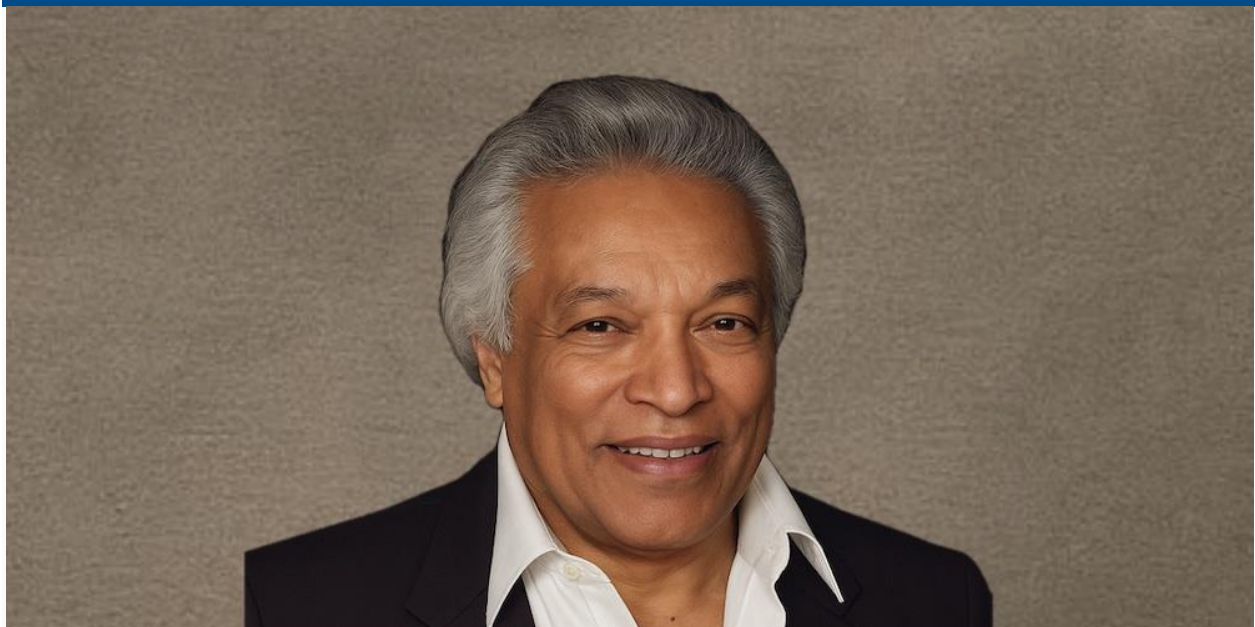


# Sandoval County Sheriff's Department & New Mexico Office of the Medical Investigator Team with Othram to Identify a 2001 John Doe

Almost 24 years after being found, the remains of a man found in Sandoval County, New Mexico have been identified as **Keeble Wofford, Sr.**

Solved



## Summary

In May 2001, hikers discovered human remains unearthed by animals from a clandestine grave in the Santa Fe National Forest, near Cuba NM. Sandoval County is a rural county north of Albuquerque. The hikers contacted law enforcement and the Sandoval County Sheriff's Office responded. The bones were excavated with an anthropologist who determined the skeletal remains had been buried in a shallow grave. Initially, investigators believed it may have been the remains of more than one person, but later evidence showed it was one adult male. Despite years of investigative efforts, the identity of this individual remained a mystery and he became known as Sandoval County John Doe. Details of the case were entered into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) as UP8365.

In 2021, the Sandoval County Sheriff's Department and the New Mexico Office of the Medical Investigator submitted forensic evidence to Othram in hopes that advanced DNA testing could assist in the identification of John Doe. Upon receipt of evidence at Othram's laboratory in The Woodlands, Texas, Othram scientists successfully developed a DNA extract. A comprehensive DNA profile was then built for the woman using Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing®. Upon completion of the process, the profile was delivered to investigators with the Sandoval County Sheriff's Office and the FBI's forensic genetic genealogy team.



Investigators built a family tree for the John Doe, which led to likely relatives of the man including a possible daughter. The daughter submitted a reference DNA sample to Othram which was compared to the unidentified man's DNA profile using KinSNP® Rapid Relationship Testing. This investigation led to the positive identification of the man as Keeble Wofford Sr. who was also known as Kimo Mahi. A death certificate was issued by New Mexico Office of the Medical Investigator and Wofford Sr.'s daughter will be receiving his cremated remains. Investigators continue to investigate the circumstances involving his death. Investigators believe he traveled from Pueblo Co to Albuquerque NM in Sept 1992 for a business meeting and was never heard from again. Wofford had a colorful life as a wrestler and actor starting in the 1950's, according to investigators.

The identification of Keeble Wofford, Sr. represents the fourth case in the State of New Mexico where officials have publicly identified an individual using technology developed by Othram. To learn more about other New Mexico cases, visit [DNASolves](#).