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NORRISTOWN FARM PARK RAPE SUSPECT ILLUSTRATION RELEASED; Composite Illustration Produced Using DNA Phenotyping



INFORMATION WANTED



NORRISTOWN FARM PARK RAPE SUSPECT ILLUSTRATION

Developed by Snapshot DNA Phenotyping

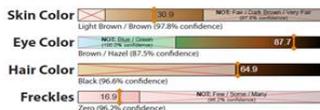
Note: hair length/style and ears may not match suspect's

Gunpoint rape occurred at Norristown Farm Park
Tuesday, August 1, 2017 between 10:30 and 10:50 a.m.

Victim described the suspect as:
black male, medium brown skin, in 20s/early 30s,
average build, between 5'5" and 5'10."

Held black semi-automatic handgun in his right hand.

If the suspect looks like someone you know,
contact Montgomery County Det. Walt Kerr at 610-278-3368
or West Norriton Det. Mark Wassmer at 610-630-1701.



Sex: Male ♂
Age: Unknown (Shown at age 25)
Body Mass: Unknown (Shown at BMI 22)
Ancestry: African Admixed with a high proportion of European ancestry

NORRISTOWN (Jan. 16, 2018) — Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele and West Norriton Township Police Chief A. Dale Mabry released a DNA composite illustration of the suspect sought in the Norristown Farm Park gunpoint rape that occurred on Aug. 1, 2017.

The composite illustration is a scientific approximation of appearance produced through a process called phenotyping, which uses the suspect's DNA sample gathered at the crime scene.

The gunpoint rape occurred on Aug. 1, 2017, between 10:30 and 10:50 a.m., on Stony Creek Road, between Lower Farm Road and Upper Farm Road in Norristown Farm Park. The man attacked the 19-year-old victim from behind and held a black semi-automatic weapon in his right hand. The victim described him as a medium-skinned black male in his 20s or early 30s, between 5 feet 5 inches and 5 feet 10 inches tall, with an average build. On that day, which had a high of 86 degrees, the rapist was wearing a dark-colored hooded sweatshirt.

The DNA sample was sent to Parbon NanoLabs in Reston, Va., which generated a composite illustration of the suspect through phenotyping. Phenotyping is the process of predicting ancestry and physical appearance from DNA evidence using trait predictions for the subject's eye color, hair color, skin color, freckling and face shape. These scientific approximations are then translated into an illustration or "Snapshot."

"Since we have our attacker's DNA, we know who he is—we just don't know his name and where he lives. While the composite is not expected to be a photo ID of the suspect, phenotyping puts a face on the rape suspect's DNA in the hopes that someone might recognize him and contact detectives," said Steele. "Montgomery County and West Norriton detectives have worked this case hard since the rape five months ago, evaluating and ruling out dozens of people developed of people of interest during the investigation. Now we are looking for some help from the public, from anyone who might recognize someone using this additional information. We are committed to using every available avenue to find this violent criminal."

The DNA sample from the Norristown Farm Park rape suspect shows that he is of "African admixed" ancestry: 52.48% European and 45.27% African. According to Parabon officials, it is common for African-Americans to have 10 to 20 percent European ancestry; however, this suspect has a roughly 50/50 mix of African and European ancestry, which is fairly rare and may indicate a recent European ancestor.

The Parabon report and "Snapshot" illustration make predictions about the suspect's ancestry and appearance. According to Parabon, the suspect has light brown or brown skin color (97.8% confidence level), zero freckling (96.2%), brown or hazel eyes (87.7%) and black hair (96.6%). The face shape, cheeks, nose, forehead chin and mouth are based on deviations from the baseline based on sex, ancestry and thousands of SNP genotypes. Additionally, all composite illustrations produced by Parabon assume the subject is 25 years old with an average body mass index (BMI) of 22. These are default settings since age and BMI cannot be determined from DNA.

"We hope Snapshot's predictions for this individual prove helpful in the investigation," said Dr. Ellen Greytak, Parabon's director of bioinformatics. "His distinctive ancestry and associated phenotypes should significantly narrow the field of possible suspects."

A \$10,000 reward is still being offered by Montgomery County District Attorney's Office and the Citizens Crime Commission of the Delaware Valley for any information leading to the identification and arrest of the person responsible for the gunpoint rape. Anyone who thinks the composite illustration resembles someone they know is asked to call Montgomery County Detectives at 610-278-3368 or West Norriton Township Police at 610-630-1701. Detectives added that someone who looks like the sketch but does not have parents of different races should not be ruled out as the suspect may have been adopted.

"A gunpoint rape by an unknown attacker is rare in Montgomery County, thankfully. We are committed to using all resources available to make sure we find this attacker. If anyone knows anything, please call police," said Steele.

Approved for Release:

Kevin R. Steele