

# Figure in Wienckowski case gets arrested again, this time in assault

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By Matt  
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Antoine J. Garner, the last person known to have seen Amanda L. Wienckowski alive before her frozen body was found in an East Side trash bin more than two years ago, was arrested for the second day in a row Thursday.

Buffalo police took Garner, 25, of Garden Village, Cheektowaga, into custody and charged him with felony assault in a June 26 attack on a 43-year-old woman in a vacant house on Jewett Avenue in Buffalo.

Buffalo police spokesman Michael J. DeGeorge confirmed that Garner was tracked down Thursday by members of the U.S. Marshals Service's Violent Felony Warrant Squad and brought to Police Headquarters for an afternoon booking.

Garner was being held overnight in the Erie County Holding Center until his arraignment this morning in Buffalo City Court. DeGeorge said Garner remains a person of interest in the continuing murder investigation surrounding Wienckowski's death.

Wednesday, Garner was arraigned in Tonawanda City Court on two counts of aggravated harassment for allegedly making threatening Facebook and telephone statements to Leslie L. Brill, mother of Wienckowski.

Brill told The Buffalo News that Garner told her she had a "death wish" during the telephone call and that she is "petrified of him."

Before Garner was released Wednesday in Tonawanda, he was served with an order of protection prohibiting him from having any contact with Brill or her family. Pending his Buffalo City Court arraignment on the unrelated assault charge, Garner is due back in Tonawanda City Court on Tuesday.

Earlier this week, Cheektowaga police took Garner into custody on a Tonawanda court arrest warrant for the alleged threats to Brill, a Tonawanda resident.

Garner has never been charged in the disappearance and death of Wienckowski, a 20-year-old Kenmore native who had gone to the Spring Street home of Garner's grandmother Dec. 5, 2008, for a paid sexual encounter with him, according to police.

DNA test results have determined that a hair recovered from Wienckowski's body belonged to Garner, but DNA from other people also was found on the woman's remains.

Preliminary results of a court-ordered second autopsy on Wienckowski by a West Coast pathologist working for her family and attorney Steven M. Cohen indicate she was strangled. The Erie County medical examiner's autopsy ruled her death accidental due to a drug overdose.

Buffalo police also have suggested she may have died from situational asphyxiation during rough sex. Brill has contended that the discovery of DNA belonging to several different people on her daughter's body is proof she was sexually assaulted and murdered.

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