

shortly after Smallwood's release from prison.

The discovery of Erica's body in 2006 left investigators worried. They knew from the similarities it was possible her case could be connected to Doris and Sonora's cases, Curless said, and they were right. In September 2006, the KSP lab linked the DNA collected in the three murders to the same, unknown offender profile.

"The first one came in that we had a foreign DNA profile," Curless said of DNA evidence from Doris Roberts' case. "The second one (Sonora's) came in, which alarmed us, because it linked two cases. But, we kind of had to examine it, go through it and weigh it and [conduct] interviews, try to locate and determine who the suspect is. By the time the third

and fourth case came in, we were very concerned at that point. Then we knew we had a serial killer."

Lexington investigators previously had created a cold case team to study old cases for new leads. Curless said the team looked at several suspects for the city's first serial killer before they identified Smallwood. With his DNA already in the department's evidence room from an earlier case, it was sent to the central lab for comparison with the unknown DNA profile.

It was a match. But, not just to the three murders. Investigators were surprised to link Smallwood all the way back to Viola Greene's 1993 rape and assault, too.

"We would have never linked Viola Greene to these other homicide cases [without DNA]," Curless said. "Because

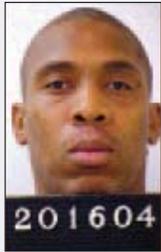
number one, the time that had elapsed, number two, the difference in ages and those type of things. There would be no logical reason to really bring those together."

Tragically, Viola never got to know justice had been served in her rape all those years earlier. She passed away of natural causes before Smallwood ever was identified, Curless said.

"Even though these victims have deceased, the arm of the law still reaches out and grabs that criminal, even after death," he said.

PREVENTING CRIME

Several jurisdictions have conducted studies based on cases like Smallwood's, to determine the probability of crime prevention and cost savings of expanding DNA >>



Robert Smallwood

37 years old, 6 feet tall, 220 pounds

Charges:

Murder (3 counts), Rape 1st (2 counts), Sodomy 1st, Robbery 1st and Burglary 1st.

Presently incarcerated by Kentucky Department of Corrections.



Sept. 27, 2006

Smallwood is interviewed, warrants obtained for three counts of murder, two counts of first-degree rape, one count first-degree sodomy and first-degree burglary

November 2002

Theft by failure to make required disposition, 3 days in jail

November 2003

Operating on suspended license and possession of marijuana, 7 days in jail

March 2005

Possession of drug paraphernalia, seven days in jail

Oct. 2005

Arrested for alcohol intoxication and disorderly conduct

April 2006

Erica Butler is raped and killed

September 2002

Domestic violence with wife — no appearances, dismissed



July 2003

Possession of marijuana charges, four days in jail



Dec. 2004

Domestic violence, no court appearance, dismissed



May 2005

Evicted; Arrested for use or possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of cocaine and marijuana: later indicted

Nov. 2005

Sentenced for cocaine possession one year prison, suspended, three years supervised probation, undergo treatment, state probation, sentenced for paraphernalia, 12 months suspended, probation violation, one year in prison

Sept. 2006

KSP lab makes DNA link between cases