



DEPUTY SHERIFF OF THE YEAR AWARD

INVESTIGATOR ROBBIE BURNETTE

Bedford County Sheriff's Office



In October 2022, twenty-seven-year-old Katlyn Lyon was found unresponsive by her roommate at her apartment located in Bedford County. Ms. Lyons was transported to Lynchburg General Hospital, but unfortunately, she passed away a short time later as a result of strangulation.

Investigator Robert Burnette of the Bedford County Sheriff's Office led the investigation, beginning with documenting injuries that confirmed homicide and not accidental death. The investigation took many turns in the initial phases and was dynamic and multiphase. Investigator Burnette spent many hours canvassing the neighborhood, local stores, and conducting interviews with Ms. Lyons's friends and family. Investigator Burnette turned his focus on Ms. Lyons' ex-boyfriend, Trenton Frye of North Carolina, as the suspect of this horrific crime. Investigator Burnette led a team of investigators who were able to locate digital evidence, including Google searches, cell phone location data, and text messages, placing Trenton Frye not only in Bedford County at the time of the homicide but at Ms. Lyons' home. Investigator Burnette's investigation revealed a pattern of stalking, deception, and lies to law enforcement.

Trenton Frye was ultimately charged and, after a four-and-a-half-day trial and approximately 50 minutes of deliberation, he was found guilty of First Degree Murder and, in August 2025, was sentenced to life in prison. The judge called the murder "as cold-blooded and premeditated" as he had ever seen.