

NEWS RELEASE

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Man sentenced to life in prison for 2008 cold case homicide

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Today, Markcus Johnson was sentenced to spend the rest of his life in prison after a jury found him guilty of the 2008 murder of 32-year-old Julio Antonio Paniagua. Johnson's trial began on February 27, 2017, in courtroom 5370 before The Honorable Hugh B. Lewis, Superior Court Judge.

The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Homicide Team tried Johnson, 30, for 1) first-degree murder and 2) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Today, the jury found him *guilty* as charged. Judge Lewis sentenced him to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

In January 2008, Mr. Paniagua was found deceased alongside a driveway leading to an apartment complex on Farm Pond Lane in Charlotte. He had been shot in the back of the head and in the foot. The case went cold until 2012 when Charlotte-Mecklenburg police located witnesses to the shooting. Police learned that Johnson and two others were leaving the apartment complex in a vehicle when Johnson called out to Mr. Paniagua, who was walking alongside the driveway. When Mr. Paniagua, who did not know the defendant, turned to run away from the vehicle, Johnson fired from the vehicle, killing Mr. Paniagua.

Johnson has previously been convicted of multiple counts of robbery with a dangerous weapon, felony breaking or entering and felony larceny. He is also currently serving a federal sentence for a weapons conviction.

Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at www.facebook.com/charmeckda and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.

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