

NEWS RELEASE

R. Andrew Murray
District Attorney

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Justin Hurd sentenced to life in prison for 2008 triple murder

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Justin Hurd, 35, was sentenced today to three consecutive sentences of life in prison without the possibility of parole for the 2008 murders of Kevin Young, Kinshasa Wagstaff and Jasmine Hines. The trial began January 21, 2014, in courtroom 5370 before The Honorable Robert C. Ervin, Superior Court Judge.

The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Homicide Team tried Hurd for 1) three counts of first-degree murder, 2) two counts of first-degree kidnapping and 3) first-degree arson. On March 3, the jury found Hurd *guilty* as charged.

Following the guilty verdict, the trial entered a sentencing phase in which the jurors had to decide whether Hurd should be sentenced to death or to life in prison without the possibility of parole. Today, jurors recommended that Hurd be sentenced to life in prison. Judge Ervin then sentenced him to three consecutive sentences of *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

"Hurd has proven himself to be a dangerous man, and his conviction means that no community will ever be threatened by his presence again," says District Attorney Andrew Murray. "Mecklenburg County is safer now that he'll spend the rest of his days behind bars. Life in prison without parole is justice for the three victims, and we respect the decision of the jury, which represents the voice of the people of Mecklenburg County."

In February 2008, firefighters discovered the bodies of Mr. Young and his girlfriend, Ms. Wagstaff, as they investigated a massive fire at the couple's home on Patricia Ryan Drive in Charlotte. Mr. Young, 34, had been stabbed and shot, while Ms. Wagstaff, 33, had been fatally stabbed. Their hands were bound. Fire investigators determined that gasoline had been poured throughout the house and set on fire.

Ms. Hines, who was Ms. Wagstaff's 18-year-old niece, was found fatally shot and doused with gasoline near an abandoned vehicle on a Huntersville road.

Police obtained surveillance footage showing Nate Sanders purchasing multiple gasoline cans on the night of the murders. Sanders, who was identified as a suspect in the killings and believed to be Hurd's accomplice, was murdered in Ohio just months after the Charlotte killings.



Justin Hurd

DNA evidence discovered at the home and in the vehicle left beside Ms. Hines' body matched Hurd's DNA. Hurd was arrested in 2009 and charged with the murders.

Inmates who were jailed with Hurd testified at trial that Hurd had talked to them about the murders, telling them that the only witness in his case was "taken care of" after the killings.

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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