

NEWS RELEASE

R. Andrew Murray
District Attorney

March 23, 2011

Mecklenburg Co. prosecutor secures conviction in Gaston Co. killing

Mecklenburg County Assistant District Attorney Bill Stetzer led the prosecution team that convicted Mark Bradley Carver of the first-degree murder of UNC Charlotte student Irina Yarmolenko. On Monday, March 21, a Gaston County jury found that Carver participated in the premeditated killing of the 20-year old woman off the banks of the Catawba River. With Gaston County ADA Stephanie Hamlin, Stetzer secured the conviction resulting in Carver being sentenced to life imprisonment without parole. Following this trial, Stetzer returns to the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office, where he has served as the Chief of the Homicide Prosecution Team since January 2011.

"I am proud of the great work Bill was able to do in Gaston County last week," said Mecklenburg District Attorney Andrew Murray. "He tried a difficult case with tough facts, securing closure for the victim's family and for the folks of Gaston County. I'm excited he will now return and resume his leadership role and vigorous efforts on behalf of the citizens of this county."

Stetzer had been working on the Yarmolenko case since her untimely death in May 2008 while he was an Assistant District Attorney in Gaston County. Despite his appointment to the new position in the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office earlier this year, Stetzer received a special commission from the N.C. Administrative Office of the Courts to continue his work with this case. "I developed a relationship with the Yarmolenko family over the course of the last two years, and I didn't think it would be right to walk out on them or my colleagues in Gaston County in the middle of this difficult case," said Stetzer.

While Stetzer was attending to this case in Gaston County, the Homicide Team in the Mecklenburg office finished one murder trial and began another. Murray stated "It's important for the community to know that while we are proud of our recent trial successes in Mecklenburg—and Gaston—courts, the work of taking violent criminals off our streets continues."

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