

NEWS RELEASE

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Jury convicts rapist in 1994 cold case; 2 others also tried for violent offenses

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – More than 20 years after he sexually assaulted a woman in Charlotte, Kirk Evans has been convicted by a jury. During the week of March 21, 2016, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Crimes Against Persons Team tried Evans, who was charged in 2014 by cold case investigators, and two other defendants for violent crimes. Another two defendants entered guilty pleas. The team prosecuted these defendants in three courtrooms before The Honorable Hugh B. Lewis, The Honorable Jesse B. Caldwell, III and The Honorable Gregory R. Hayes, Superior Court Judges.

Kirk Evans, 52, was tried for 1) first-degree rape, 2) first-degree kidnapping and 3) robbery with a dangerous weapon. The jury found Evans *guilty* of the lesser-included offenses of second-degree rape and second-degree kidnapping. The jury found him *not guilty* of the robbery charge. On March 28, 2016, Judge Lewis sentenced Evans to a total of 21 years in prison. Upon his release from prison, Evans must register as a sex offender and participate in satellite-based monitoring for the rest of his life. In February 1994, Evans approached a woman on Beatties Ford Road in Charlotte and forced her into his car at gunpoint. He drove her to a deserted location, raped her and then drove her back to the Beatties Ford Road area. Investigators were unable to identify Evans as the suspect until 2014 when the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's Sexual Assault Cold Case Unit reanalyzed evidence, which contained DNA matching that of Evans. At trial, prosecutors introduced the testimony of another woman who was raped by Evans in 1997 to establish his pattern of violent attacks on women. Evans was also convicted by a jury in 1999 of that sexual assault.

Hakeem Dickens, 23, was tried for two counts of robbery with a dangerous weapon. The jury found him *not guilty*.

Mario Beam, 38, was tried for 1) two counts of rape of a child and 2) two counts of indecent liberties with a child. A jury found *Beam not guilty*. As a result of the verdict, the State was unable to proceed on the charge of being a violent habitual felon.

Franswa Crawford, 32, pled guilty to 1) assault on a law enforcement officer with a firearm and 2) resisting a public officer. Judge Hayes sentenced Crawford to 23-40 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 36 months of supervised probation. As a condition of his probation, Crawford must serve 10 months in prison.

Gabriel Fierro, 54, pled guilty to sexual battery. Judge Hayes sentenced Fierro to 60 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 18 months of supervised probation.

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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