

NEWS RELEASE

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Mid-year Homicide Team report for January-June 2015

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Continuing their work to protect the community from Mecklenburg County's most violent offenders, the District Attorney's Homicide Team convicted 22 defendants between January and June 2015. Five of those defendants were sentenced to life in prison.

In six months' time, the team tried seven defendants. This year, the Homicide Team also committed to lending its prosecutors to help the office's Assistant District Attorneys who prosecute sexual assault cases as part of an effort to target sex offenders. In April, the team assisted in the prosecution of [Stephen Ward](#), who was sentenced to 390-588 months in prison after a jury found him guilty of two counts of statutory rape and two counts of indecent liberties with a child.

The following defendants were convicted by the Homicide Team between January and June:

January 2015

Demarcus Reid, 22, pled guilty to two counts of misdemeanor death by vehicle in connection with the 2013 deaths of Deborah Bakashika and Ashley Gilliam. He was sentenced to the maximum possible punishment of a total of 150 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail.

Kayla Davis, 19, pled guilty to felony child abuse in connection with the 2014 death of Londyn Johnson, who died in a motor vehicle collision. She was sentenced to 15-30 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending her successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. As a condition of her probation, Davis must serve 90 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail. Charges against a codefendant, who is charged with felony death by vehicle, are still pending.

February 2015

Richard Payne, 26, pled guilty to second-degree murder in the 2013 killing of James Lockhart. Payne was sentenced to 228-286 months in prison.

March 2015

[James Hunter](#), 34, was tried for first-degree murder in the 2013 killing of Ronny Eugene Steele. A jury found him *guilty* as charged. Hunter was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

Travis Pemberton, 30, pled guilty to second-degree murder for the 2014 killing of Jakobie Morgan. He was sentenced to 300-372 months in prison.

Shagarean Baker, 21, pled guilty in connection with the 2013 killing of Zhonton Berry. He will be sentenced at a later date.

Edwin Medel, 22, and Jose Sosa, 21, each pled guilty in connection with the 2014 death of Tony Van Tran. Charges against a codefendant in this case are still pending.

April 2015

[Demarcus Martel Melvin](#), 25, was tried for 1) first-degree murder and 2) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon for the 2013 murder of Terrence Mingo, 28. The jury found him *guilty* as charged. Melvin was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

[Justin Savon Dixon](#), 24, was tried for 1) first-degree murder, 2) assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury and 3) discharging a weapon into occupied property in connection with the 2012 murder of Michael Crawley. The jury found him *guilty* of assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury and discharging a weapon into occupied property. The jury found him *not guilty* of murder. Dixon was sentenced to a total of 50-84 months in prison.

Eddrick Davis, 30, pled guilty to accessory after the fact to first-degree murder in connection with the 2014 murder of Terrance Johnson, and he admitted to violating the terms of his probation for a prior conviction. He was sentenced to 67-93 months in prison.

Daniel Lewis Roberts, 29, pled guilty to 1) second-degree murder and 2) driving while impaired for the 2014 death of Barnette White, Jr., 25. He was sentenced to 94-125 months in prison.

Orlando Thomas, 27, pled guilty to 1) robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the 2014 murder of Terrance Johnson, as well as 2) common law robbery and 3) conspiracy to commit common law robbery in connection with an unrelated incident. He will be sentenced at a later date.

Jeremy Patton, 22, pled guilty to two counts of second-degree murder for the 2012 murders of Steffon Quinton Montgomery, 24, and Jonathan Michael Green, 27. Patton was sentenced to 120-156 months in prison. Patton's codefendant Travis Peters previously pled guilty to the murders of Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Green, and Peters was sentenced to a total of 336-441 months in prison.

May 2015

[Emileo Estevez Blount](#), 24, was tried for 1) first-degree murder under North Carolina's Felony Murder Rule and 2) nine counts of attempting to discharge a firearm into an occupied vehicle in connection with the 2007 murder of Tawanna Montgomery, 43. The jury found him *guilty* as charged. Because the defendant was under age 18 at the time of the offense and the jury convicted Blount of first-degree murder solely under the Felony Murder Rule, state law required that Blount be sentenced to *life in prison with the possibility of parole after 25 years* for the murder offense. For the remaining charges, Blount received additional sentences totaling 145-220 months in prison. Those sentences are to be served consecutively to the sentence of life in prison.

[Linny Barcliff](#), 23, pled guilty to two counts of first-degree murder for the 2011 murders of Lorenzo and Cheryl Graves. Barcliff was sentenced to two consecutive sentences of *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

[James Stanley Daye](#), 56, was tried for first-degree murder for the 2012 killing of Walter Lee Gregory, 37. The jury found him *guilty* as charged. Before the trial began, Daye pled guilty to possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Daye was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

Wisezah Buckman, 27, pled guilty to 1) second-degree murder, 2) assault with a deadly weapon with the intent to kill and 3) damage to personal property in connection with the 2014 murder of Thurmont Davis. Buckman was sentenced to 312-387 months in prison.

Naquan Curry, 16, pled guilty to 1) four counts of robbery with a dangerous weapon, 2) attempted robbery with a dangerous weapon and 3) five counts of conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the 2014 murder of Ronald Glenn Gullette, Jr. He will be sentenced at a later date.

Brian Atkins, 40, pled guilty to 1) involuntary manslaughter and 2) assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury in connection with the 2013 death of Nicole Wright, and he admitted to violating his probation for a prior conviction. Atkins was sentenced to 23-40 months in prison.

June 2015

[Robert Vincent Dahlke](#), 51, was tried for involuntary manslaughter for the 2013 death of Jazmyn Ivanna Gill, 23. The jury found him *guilty* as charged. Dahlke was sentenced to 13-25 months in prison.

Michael Javier Zelaya, 27, pled guilty to felony obstruction of justice for his role in the 2014 murder of Noel Hernandez. Zelaya was sentenced to 6-17 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. Codefendants in this case are being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

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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