

# NEWS RELEASE

**R. Andrew Murray**  
District Attorney

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## **Mid-year Homicide Team report for January-June 2013**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Continuing efforts to quickly and effectively seek justice for families of homicide victims, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Homicide Team has implemented an aggressive schedule to prosecute defendants in homicide cases. So far in 2013, the Homicide Team has convicted 46 defendants.

Between January and June 2013, the team tried nine cases. One trial ended in a mistrial after the jury could not reach a unanimous verdict. In the other eight trials, each defendant was found guilty and sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*. Each year since District Attorney Andrew Murray took office in 2011, the Homicide Team has increased its number of trials. Last year, the team tried 12 cases. The team expects to try 15 cases in 2013.

The following defendants have been convicted by the Homicide Team in 2013:

### **January 2013**

Mark Anthony Cox, 23, pled guilty to 1) first-degree murder, 2) murder of an unborn child, 3) robbery with a dangerous weapon and 4) felony larceny in connection with the January 2012 murder of Danielle Watson, 25, and her unborn child. Cox was sentenced to two consecutive sentences of *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

Edward Timothy McClain, 43, pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter for the July 2012 death of Yolanda Copper, 39. He was sentenced to 85-114 months in prison.

Maria Turcios, 42, pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter in the March 2012 death of Ricardo Torres, 32. She was sentenced to 64-89 months in prison.

Therome Willie Poe, 30, pled guilty to conspiracy to sell cocaine in connection with the June 2011 killing of Singbay Mulbah, 32. Poe was sentenced to 17-21 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending the successful completion of 36 months of probation. As conditions of his probation, Poe must serve 6 months in prison and pay restitution.

Kevin King, 22, pled guilty to accessory after the fact to attempted robbery with dangerous weapon in connection with the June 2011 killing of Singbay Mulbah, 32. He will be sentenced at a later date.

James Farris Hodges, 29, pled guilty to two counts of accessory after the fact to first-degree murder. The charges stem from two separate incidents: the January 2010 murder of Jared Bolli

and the August 2010 murder of Brooks Crist in Charlotte. Hodges will be sentenced at a later date.

## **February 2013**

[Marco Davis](#), 39, was tried for 1) first-degree murder and 2) conspiracy to commit first-degree murder in the August 2009 killing of Palo Childress, 23. A jury found Davis guilty as charged. He was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole* for the murder conviction, as well as an additional 282-348 months in prison for the conspiracy offense.

[Anthony Darrell Long](#), 40, was tried for 1) first-degree murder, 2) attempted first-degree murder, 3) assault with a deadly weapon with the intent to kill, and 4) second-degree sex offense in connection with the August 2007 murder of his estranged wife, Sonia Long, 32. A jury found Long guilty as charged. He was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*, as well as an additional 251-320 months in prison.

Jamie Knox, 47, pled guilty to second-degree murder in connection with the December 2011 killing of Chapel Bernard Waymyers, 40. Knox was sentenced to 157-201 months in prison.

Shaun Morgan-Dalton, 23, pled guilty to 1) second-degree murder, 2) five counts of robbery with a dangerous weapon, 3) two counts of conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon, 4) first-degree burglary, and 5) assault with a deadly weapon. The convictions of second-degree murder, two counts of robbery with a dangerous weapon and one count of conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon are connected with the April 2012 killing of Myron Billings, 30. The remaining charges are related to a separate incident that also occurred in April 2012. Morgan-Dalton was later sentenced to a total of 240-313 months in prison.

Brandon Gregory King, 24, pled guilty to 1) attempted robbery with a dangerous weapon and 2) conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the June 2011 death of Singbay Mulbah, 32. King will be sentenced at a later date.

[Michael Crowder](#), 36, was tried for first-degree murder for the March 2007 murder of Aaron Shawn Wood, 31. A jury found him guilty as charged. Crowder was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

## **March 2013**

Shea Michael Cook, 29, pled guilty to felony obstruction of justice in connection with the November 2010 death of Derek Roman, 26. Cook was sentenced to 6-8 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending the successful completion of 30 months of supervised probation.

[Andre Earl Hampton](#), 27, was tried for 1) first-degree murder and 2) two counts of felony child abuse inflicting serious injury for the 2008 murder of his 23-month-old son, Elijah Burger. A jury found him guilty as charged. Hampton was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

Joseph Lloyd Rayfield, 43, pled guilty to 1) second-degree murder and 2) robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the July 2012 murder of Alfred Michael Smith, 52. Rayfield was sentenced to 258-322 months in prison for the murder offense and an additional 84-113 months in prison for the robbery offense. Those sentences are to be served consecutively.

Brandon Blakeney, 32, pled guilty to second-degree murder for the December 2011 killing of his wife, 34-year-old Catherine Blakeney. He was sentenced to 240-300 months in prison.

Cassandra Mingo, 27, pled guilty to second-degree murder for the September 2011 killing of 21-month-old Colton Doleman. Mingo was sentenced to 160-201 months in prison.

### **April 2013**

Damien Wright, 17, pled guilty to second-degree murder for the August 2012 death of his friend, Khalil Malik Cousart, 13. Wright was sentenced to 120-156 months in prison.

James Cleveland, 27, pled guilty to second-degree murder for the September 2011 murder of Demytre Pendleton, 2. Cleveland was sentenced to 156-197 months in prison.

Shannon Merriman, 24, pled guilty to second-degree murder for the July 2011 death of her 21-month-old son, Marcus Davis, Jr. Merriman was sentenced to 110-141 months in prison.

Steven Driggers, 21, pled guilty to felony death by motor vehicle for the June 2012 death of Reinaldo Montejó Rodriguez, 55. Driggers was sentenced to 24-41 months in prison.

James Andrews, 19, pled guilty to 1) robbery with a dangerous weapon and 2) conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the August 2011 killing of Caleb Copenhaver, 20. Andrews was sentenced to 48-67 months in prison.

Stephen Watts, 52, pled guilty to 1) misdemeanor death by vehicle and 2) driving while impaired in the death of Autumn Soyka, 31. Watts was sentenced to 60 days in the Mecklenburg County jail for the misdemeanor death by vehicle offense. For the DWI offense, he was sentenced to 12 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. As a condition of his probation, Watts must serve 7 days in the Mecklenburg County jail and be placed on electronic house arrest for 4 months after he is released from custody.

Marcis Turner, 38, pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter for the September 2012 death of Derrick Lee Miller, 41. Turner was sentenced to 51-74 months in prison.

Shamon Goins, 22, pled guilty to accessory after the fact of discharging a weapon into an occupied conveyance in operation in connection with the 2008 murders of Kevin Cano, 20, and Jamie Gill, 20. Goins was sentenced to 21-26 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 36 months of supervised probation. As a condition of his probation, Goins must serve 135 days in the Mecklenburg County jail.

[Robert Lee McPhail](#), 40, was tried for 1) first-degree murder, 2) robbery with a dangerous weapon and 3) conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the April 2011 murder of Larry Dean Wallace, Jr., 40. A jury found him guilty as charged. McPhail was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*, as well as an additional 38-55 months in prison.

Damon Kenneth Grimes, 39, pled guilty to second-degree murder for the April 2011 murder of Larry Dean Wallace, Jr., 40. He was sentenced to 165-207 months in prison.

## May 2013

[Jeremiah Lamont Luke](#), 35, was tried for first-degree murder for the November 2011 killing of Mikal Lee Legrande, 30. A jury found him guilty as charged. He was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

Suliman El Amin, 33, pled guilty to accessory after the fact to second-degree murder in connection with the May 2010 death of Jermaine McJunkins. He was sentenced to 48-67 months in prison.

Habacu Rodriguez Lopez, 38, pled guilty to 1) second-degree murder and 2) assault with a deadly weapon with the intent to kill inflicting serious injury in connection with the June 2012 murder of Richard Snyder, 50. Lopez was sentenced to 329-419 months in prison.

Earnest Gurley, 64, pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter in connection with the death of his son, Benjamin Gurley, 21. He was sentenced to 80-108 months in prison.

Jay Wallace, 21, pled guilty to 1) robbery with a dangerous weapon and 2) conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the April 2012 murder of Will Arnold, 20. Wallace was sentenced to 64-89 months in prison and ordered to pay restitution.

Jamal Pittman, 22, pled guilty to 1) robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the January 2010 murder of Jared Bolli, 25, and 2) two counts of common law robbery. Pittman was sentenced to 55-76 months in prison.

Raquel Belinda Mallory, 39, pled guilty to felony death by motor vehicle for the July 2012 death of Ricky Julian Neal, 46. She was sentenced to 23-40 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending her successful completion of 36 months of supervised probation. As a condition of her probation, Mallory must serve 8 months in prison and undergo a substance abuse assessment.

Ismael Mendoza, 29, pled guilty to accessory after the fact to voluntary manslaughter in connection with the March 2011 deaths of Luis Alberto Aguilar-Amezcuca, 20, and Omar Mendez De La Cruz, 18. He was sentenced to 16-20 months in prison.

Ilse Perez, 21, pled guilty to 1) felony hit and run inflicting serious injury and 2) driving while impaired in connection with the August 2012 death of Rhonda Williamson, 28. For the hit and run offense, Perez was sentenced to 16-29 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending her successful completion of 36 months of supervised probation. As a condition of her probation, she must serve 90 days in the Mecklenburg County jail. For the DWI offense, she was sentenced to 60 days in the Mecklenburg County jail; that sentence was suspended, but she was ordered to serve 7 days in jail for the DWI offense. As conditions of her probation, Perez was ordered to not operate a motor vehicle or consume alcohol during her probation, forfeit her license for two years, perform 24 hours of community service and undergo a substance abuse assessment.

Samuel Walker, 19, pled guilty to assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury in connection with the September 2012 murder of Kydaryune Curry, 17. Walker will be sentenced at a later date.

[Ellis Eugene Royster](#), 25, was tried for first-degree murder for the August 2010 killing of 2-year-old Amias Robinson. A jury found him guilty as charged. Royster was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

Carole LaRossa, 50, pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter for the April 2012 death of James LaRossa, 51. She was sentenced to 38-58 months in prison.

### **June 2013**

Vernon Carlton Davis, 23, pled guilty to 1) second-degree murder and 2) assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury in connection with the August 2010 murder of Jonathan Jackson, 24. He was sentenced to a total of 186-242 months in prison.

Prince Edward Hannah, 24, pled guilty to 1) second-degree murder, 2) two counts of robbery with a dangerous weapon and 3) conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon for the April 2012 murder of Myron Billings, 30. Hannah was sentenced to a total of 240-312 months in prison.

Bruck Fekadu, 17, pled guilty to assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury in connection with the September 2012 murder of Kydaryune Curry, 17. He will be sentenced at a later date.

Jeremy Pate, 20, pled guilty to assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury in connection with the September 2012 murder of Kydaryune Curry, 17. He will be sentenced at a later date.

Luis Mendez, 35, pled guilty to two counts of voluntary manslaughter in connection with the March 2011 deaths of Luis Alberto Aguilar-Amezcuca, 20, and Omar Mendez De La Cruz, 18. He was sentenced to a total of 128-172 months in prison.

Nelson Joseph Brice, 21, pled guilty to felony obstruction of justice in connection with the April 2012 murders of Steffon Quinton Montgomery, 24, and Jonathan Michael Green, 27. He will be sentenced at a later date.

[Chauncey Sterling](#), 20, was tried for 1) first-degree murder and 2) attempted robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the April 2011 murder of Robert Latimer Barber, 64. He was sentenced to *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

### **The following defendants previously pled guilty and were sentenced this year:**

Ngai Yarree Sutton, 39, previously pled guilty to 1) second-degree murder and 2) robbery with a dangerous weapon for the April 2011 murder of Larry Dean Wallace, Jr., 40. In April 2013, Sutton, who testified for the State during the trial against Robert Lee McPhail, was sentenced to 138-175 months in prison.

Jacob Leon Case, 20, previously pled guilty to 1) robbery with a dangerous weapon and 2) conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the January 2010 murder of Jared Bolli, 25. In April 2013, he was sentenced to 64-86 months in prison.