

NEWS RELEASE

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Defendants who exploited elderly among 3 convicted by Crimes Against Property Team

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – A defendant who broke into a Charlotte home and two others who financially exploited elderly victims were recently convicted by the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Crimes Against Property Team. The team prosecuted cases during the week of June 29, 2015, in courtrooms 5150 and 5370 before The Honorable Forrest D. Bridges and The Honorable Robert T. Sumner, Superior Court Judges.

Wade Knight, 31, was tried for 1) felony breaking or entering and 2) larceny after breaking or entering. The jury found him *guilty* as charged. Judge Sumner sentenced Knight to 10-12 months in prison. Judge Sumner also sentenced Knight to an additional 10-12 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation.

Brad Norwood, 42, was tried for exploitation of an older or disabled adult. When the jury was unable to reach a unanimous verdict, Judge Bridges declared a mistrial.

When the State called Vieron Orlando Jones, 35, for trial, he pled guilty as charged to 1) embezzlement and 2) exploitation of an older or disabled adult. He was sentenced to 6-17 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 30 months of supervised probation. As a condition of his probation, Jones must serve two sentences of 120 days each in the Mecklenburg County Jail. Judge Bridges ordered that the first sentence be served immediately and that the second sentence be deferred for one year. If Jones substantially completes all of the conditions set by Judge Bridges – which include selling a car and paying all proceeds to the victim, assuming the debts incurred to the victim's credit card and paying off the equity lines of credit Jones took out on the victim's mortgage – within a year, a judge could strike the second 120-day sentence. In September 2012, the victim contacted Charlotte-Mecklenburg police to report that Jones had misappropriated her money. After suffering a heart attack in 2009, the victim gave Jones, whom she'd met through her church, her power of attorney over her finances. In 2012, the victim realized that Jones had presented her with a number of documents to sign when she was hospitalized and that those documents deeded her property to Jones and made him the primary beneficiary of her insurance benefits and her will. She also learned that several of her credit cards had been maxed out with purchases made for Jones' personal benefit such as airfare, musical instruments, clothing and vehicle repairs. An investigation revealed that Jones also opened two equity lines of credit on the victim's mortgage, opened a credit card in her name without her knowledge and opened a cellphone account in her late husband's name. Charlotte-Mecklenburg police determined that Jones defrauded the victim of \$130,000.

Ponza Jackson, 62, pled guilty to exploitation of an older or disabled adult. Jackson was sentenced to 6-8 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending her successful completion of 60 months of supervised probation. As a condition of her probation, Jackson must pay the victim \$39,490 in restitution.

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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