

NEWS RELEASE

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III
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Felony Special Victims Team trial session leads to 3 convictions

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Felony Special Victims Team convicted three defendants during the team's most recent trial session. In one case, a jury found a massage therapist guilty of multiple sex offenses.

The proceedings, which began January 2, 2024, were held in courtrooms 5370 and 5110 before The Honorable J. Thomas Davis and The Honorable Bradley B. Letts, Superior Court Judges.

Eugene Gatling, 39, was tried for 1) second-degree forcible sex offense and 2) sexual battery. Gatling was a massage therapist at a spa in South Charlotte. On January 13, 2021, Gatling sexually assaulted a client after she fell asleep on the massage table. He had previously assaulted another woman at a different location in South Charlotte, less than seven months earlier. The jury found Gatling *guilty* as charged. The jury also found the State proved beyond a reasonable doubt an aggravating factor, namely that Gatling abused his position of trust and confidence when he committed the sexual assault. Gatling will be sentenced at a later date.

Aaron Linton, 28, was tried for 1) felony breaking or entering with the intent to terrorize and injure, 2) larceny of a firearm, 3) assault on a female, and 4) injury to personal property. The jury found him *not guilty* of all charges.

Justin Chandler, 38, was tried for 1) assault by strangulation and 2) assault on a female. Judge Davis dismissed the case at the close of the State's evidence.

Donald Clinton, 36, pled *guilty* to habitual misdemeanor assault. Judge Davis sentenced Clinton to 8 to 19 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 36 months of supervised probation.

Laquisha Jones, 36, pled *guilty* to assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury. Judge Davis sentenced Jones to 25 to 42 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending her completion of two years of supervised probation.

Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, follow @CharMeckDA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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