

District Attorney's
Office
State of North Carolina
26th Prosecutorial District
Mecklenburg County

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NEWS RELEASE

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III
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Man sentenced to life in prison for Charlotte woman's murder

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Dayshawn Beckham was sentenced to life in prison for the February 2020 murder of 30-year-old Zenita Graham. The trial, which began on September 29, 2025, and concluded with today's verdict, was held in courtroom 5110 before the Honorable David H. Strickland, Superior Court Judge.

The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Homicide Team tried Dayshawn Beckham, 29, for first-degree murder. Beckham exercised his right to a bench trial. Judge Strickland found him *guilty as charged* and sentenced him to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

On February 17, 2020, officers with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department responded to a call for service outside a barber shop on Rozzelles Ferry Road. The caller, Zenita Graham, told the dispatcher that she had been shot. Responding officers located Graham, suffering from a gunshot wound, on the ground on the driver's side of a vehicle. She was initially alert and able to communicate and told officers that "Doug" shot her. Graham was then transported to the hospital where she succumbed to her injuries.

During the course of their investigation, detectives were able to identify Dayshawn Beckham, AKA "Doug", as a suspect. Beckham was arrested the next day and had a 9mm pistol in his pocket. Detectives executed a search warrant at Beckham's residence. There, they found keys to the vehicle next to which the victim was found, as well as 9mm bullets. Investigators also recovered a discharged 9mm shell casing at the scene of the shooting. Lab testing confirmed that the recovered shell casing matched the pistol found on Beckham. Investigators also recovered fingerprints from the passenger side of the vehicle at the scene that were later determined to match Beckham.

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