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Willingboro Man Indicted for Murder

Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri reported that a Mercer County grand jury returned a seven-count indictment last week charging a Willingboro man with the April 8, 2016 shooting death of Elliot Simon Jr.

Virgil R. Howard, age 27, of Ebbtine Lane, was indicted on charges of first-degree murder, first-degree felony murder, first-degree robbery, second-degree possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, second-degree unlawful possession of a weapon and second-degree certain persons not to possess a firearm. Based on the circumstances of the offense, Howard is subject to be sentenced to a term of life imprisonment without eligibility for parole. He remains in jail in lieu of \$1 million bail.

On April 8, 2016, at approximately 9:08 p.m., Trenton police responded to the area of 37-49 N. Hermitage Avenue after the ShotSpotter system detected gunshots. Upon arrival, police found 52-year-old Simon in Boudinot Street suffering from gunshot wounds to the chest. The victim was transported to Capital Health Regional Medical Center where he was pronounced dead a short time later.

The charges are a result of an investigation by the Mercer County Homicide Task Force. Assistant Prosecutor Kathleen Petrucci presented the case to the grand jury.

Despite having been indicted, every defendant is presumed innocent until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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