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Three Individuals Indicted in November 2018 Murder

A Mercer County grand jury returned a 19-count indictment last week charging three individuals in a November 2018 shooting that killed 19-year-old Shaela Johnson.

Nazier Francois, 20, of Trenton, Watson George, 20, of Ewing, and Keith Hamilton, 21, of Trenton, were each named in the indictment handed up on Friday, June 28. Their specific charges are:

Francois and George: conspiracy to commit murder (first degree), conspiracy to commit aggravated assault (second degree), conspiracy to commit aggravated arson (second degree), conspiracy to tamper with physical evidence (second degree), murder (first degree), criminal attempt to commit murder (first degree), aggravated assault (second degree), aggravated assault (fourth degree), two counts of possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose (second degree), three counts of unlawful possession of a handgun (second degree), aggravated arson (second degree), theft by receiving stolen property (third degree), hindering apprehension or prosecution (third degree), two counts of tampering with physical evidence (fourth degree) and obstructing the administration of law (fourth degree).

Hamilton: conspiracy to commit aggravated arson (second degree), conspiracy to tamper with physical evidence (second degree), aggravated arson (second degree), theft by receiving stolen property (third degree), hindering apprehension or prosecution (third degree), two counts of tampering with physical evidence (fourth degree) and obstructing the administration of law (fourth degree).

The indictment also charges a fourth male who has not yet been identified by police. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Mercer County Homicide Task Force at (609) 989-6406 or mchtftips@mercercounty.org.

At approximately 2 p.m. on November 27, 2018, Trenton police responded to the 800 block of Stuyvesant Avenue on a report of shots fired. Upon arrival, patrol units discovered the victim, later identified as Johnson, suffering from multiple gunshot wounds to her head and body. Johnson was being loaded into the back of a pickup truck by several people. Officers followed the truck to the hospital where Johnson was pronounced dead a short time later.

The investigation revealed numerous .45 and .40 caliber shell casings in the intersection of Stuyvesant and Hoffman avenues, as well as on the sidewalk and in the entryway of a deli on Stuyvesant Avenue. Area surveillance footage showed two males exiting a Nissan Maxima and firing at the victim. It also showed shots being fired from the driver of the vehicle. Police located the vehicle engulfed in flames at the intersection of Howell and Franklin streets a few hours later.

The indictment is a result of an investigation by the Mercer County Homicide Task Force. Senior Assistant Prosecutor Heather Hadley 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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