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Mercer County Homicide Task Force Investigation Leads to Charges in August Double Homicide in Trenton

Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri announced today that the Mercer County Homicide Task Force has arrested and charged three men for the August 9, 2020 double homicide on Centre Street in Trenton.

Darnell Davis, 19, of Willingboro, Tyzir Hamilton, 19, of Trenton, and Treizon Thompson, 20, of Trenton, are each charged with two counts of first-degree murder, one count of second-degree possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, one count of second-degree unlawful possession of a weapon and one count of first-degree conspiracy. The three men were all taken into custody on Tuesday in Trenton. The prosecutor's office has filed motions to detain all three defendants.

The charges are the result of an investigation by the Mercer County Homicide Task Force. Prosecutor Onofri praised the investigative work of the HTF and thanked the public for the assistance provided during the investigation. "For weeks, detectives have methodically pieced the puzzle together, identifying the vehicle and all three suspects. But the help of the public in solving this double homicide was instrumental. It allowed us to follow leads from the very beginning, helping to point investigators in the right direction and allowing them to connect the dots."

"Now more than ever, we need the community to work with us," Prosecutor Onofri continued, referencing Tuesday night's shooting that left an eight year old and a 16 year old dead. "This homicide case, along with recent sex assault cases, have been successfully solved by us all working together for justice, and I encourage the public to continue communication with law enforcement."

On August 9, 2020, at approximately 7:30 a.m., patrol officers with the Trenton Police Department responded to the area of 300 Centre Street for a shooting in progress. Upon arrival, officers located the first victim, William Irizarry, 18, lying on the street in the area of 339 Centre Street. He had sustained multiple gunshot wounds throughout his body and was pronounced dead at the scene. The second victim, Julius Vargas, 18, was located inside a corner market with a gunshot wound. Vargas was transported to the hospital for treatment, however, succumbed to his injuries a short time later.

The Trenton Police Crime Scene Unit photographed and processed the scene. Approximately 24 9mm shell casings were located. The scene inside of the market was also photographed and processed, and blood and several individual bags of suspected heroin were discovered.

According to the affidavit, HTF detectives were able to locate a witness and numerous cameras in the area of the shooting. A suspect vehicle was identified as a black Chrysler 300 with PA plates, along with two shooters, described as two black males wearing all black clothing and black ski masks. The black Chrysler 300 is seen circling the area before the shooting, then parking and watching the victims for several minutes as they stood on the corner with others. When the suspect vehicle drives up to the corner and stops, two shooters, later identified as Hamilton and Thompson, exit. Both run toward the victims, firing multiple gunshots. The driver, later identified as Davis, remains in the car. Hamilton and Thompson then chase after Irizarry as he runs into the street, continuing to shoot at him. When Irizarry falls to ground after suffering a gunshot wound, they both continue to shoot at him as he lays on the ground. Afterward, Hamilton and Thompson return to the suspect vehicle, which flees.

Further investigation revealed that a black Chrysler 300 was stolen out of Bensalem, Pennsylvania, on August 3, 2020, and seen on an automated license plate reader camera in the area of Pennington Avenue and Reservoir Street in Trenton on August 4. Detectives were able to partially match the license plate of the suspect vehicle to that of the stolen vehicle out of Bensalem.

The Mercer County Prosecutor's Office Computer Crimes Unit conducted a physical search and forensic examination of Irizarry's cell phone, pursuant to a search warrant, and a photo was found that Irizarry posted on his Facebook page disrespecting the H-Block gang. Detectives continued to monitor multiple public social media posts throughout the month of August of numerous H-Block gang members talking about the murders of Irizarry and Vargas, taunting and threatening friends and family of the victims. They also referenced Irizarry disrespecting the H-Block gang prior to being murdered.

On September 1, 2020, while on surveillance during another investigation, HTF detectives observed the black Chrysler 300 with Pennsylvania plates driving in the area of Perry and Southard streets in Trenton. While detectives were attempting to identify the occupants, the vehicle took off at a high rate of speed and a pursuit ensued. The pursuit came to an end on Reservoir Street near Frazier Street, where the vehicle crashed into a telephone pole and the

occupants subsequently escaped on foot. Area surveillance footage shows the vehicle crash into the pole. Two black males exited the vehicle through the front passenger door, both wearing all black with their hoods up. The black males fled on Reservoir Street toward Frazier Street and subsequently made a right onto Frazier Street toward Pennington Avenue, then out of sight. One of the black males had what appeared to be a black handgun in his right hand.

A search warrant was obtained for the vehicle and detectives located a fully-loaded, 9mm Taurus handgun under the driver's seat. The handgun was submitted to the New Jersey State Police Laboratory and identified as one of the guns used in the murders of Irizarry and Vargas. Further investigation revealed another witness who was able to identify Davis, Hamilton and Thompson as being responsible for the deaths of Irizarry and Vargas.

During Tuesday's arrests of the three suspects, additional search warrants were executed in relation to the investigation and two more guns were located. Prosecutor Onofri thanked the Mercer County Homicide Task Force, his Special Investigations Unit, the U.S. Marshals NY/NJ Regional Fugitive Task Force, and the Mercer County Tactical Response Team, under the leadership of Mercer County Sheriff Jack Kemler, for their assistance.

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

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