



## OFFICE OF THE MERCER COUNTY PROSECUTOR

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### **Two Trenton Men Arrested for the Murder of Taquan Ellerbe**

An investigation conducted by the Mercer County Homicide Task Force and the Trenton Police Department concluded last week with the arrest of two Trenton men for the May 2019 murder of Taquan Ellerbe, Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri announced today.

Bryant Coon, 20, of Trenton, and an 18-year-old Trenton male are each charged with one count 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. Coon was arrested Friday afternoon in Trenton by the U.S. Marshals NY/NJ Regional Fugitive Task Force. The prosecutor's office has filed a motion to detain him. While now 18, the second defendant in the case is charged on a juvenile petition because of his age at the time the murder was committed and, therefore, his name is being withheld. The prosecutor's office will seek to try him as an adult. He was served with his charges last week and is already detained pending trial on unrelated charges.

At approximately 5:30 p.m. on May 22, 2019, Trenton police received several 911 calls reporting a male shot at 74 Bellevue Avenue. A Shot Spotter activation was also received for six rounds at the same location. Officers arrived on scene and located the victim behind 80 Bellevue Avenue suffering from numerous gunshot wounds. The victim, identified as Ellerbe, 18, was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced dead a short time later.

An initial investigation of the crime scene revealed .40 caliber and .45 caliber shell casings in front of the area of 74-76 Bellevue Avenue, as well as glass that was consistent with broken glass from an automobile. Information gathered at the scene revealed an older model blue Buick with a temporary registration tag drove down Bellevue Avenue toward Calhoun Street with two individuals wearing masks inside. As Ellerbe exited a residence onto Bellevue Avenue, the passenger of the blue Buick shot at Ellerbe. The Buick then continued down Bellevue Avenue toward Calhoun Street. After Ellerbe was struck, he ran to the rear of 80 Bellevue Avenue where he was found by responding Trenton Emergency Medical Services.

Shortly after the shooting, a blue Buick Park Avenue with a temporary registration tag was located abandoned at the rear of Bessemer Alley. The Buick appeared to have a gunshot to the rear windshield with shattered glass that was consistent with glass located at the shooting scene on Bellevue Avenue. Inside of the Buick, paperwork was located for the juvenile defendant, along with two cell phones. A review of one of the phones revealed numerous photographs of Coon as well as several of Coon with the juvenile defendant. Several images depicted Coon and the juvenile defendant with firearms. The phone number of the second cell phone found was a registered contact number for Coon with the court.

Homicide task force detectives reviewed video surveillance footage from the area and observed a blue Buick Park Avenue with a temporary license plate affixed to the rear of the vehicle in the area near the time of the homicide. The blue Buick drives up Calhoun Street, turns onto Pashley Avenue, turns onto N. Willow Street, and ultimately toward Bellevue Avenue during the timeframe of the shooting. Detectives were able to track the Buick's vehicle identification number and also obtain reports that Coon was seen earlier that day driving a Buick Park Avenue.

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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