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Mercer County Jury Finds Trenton Man Guilty in August 2020 Double Homicide

TRENTON – Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri announced that a Trenton man was convicted by a jury this week for the August 9, 2020 double homicide on Centre Street in Trenton.

On September 21, 2023, Tyzir Hamilton, 22, was convicted on all counts of the indictment, including two counts of murder, conspiracy to commit murder, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose and unlawful possession of a handgun.

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.

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 was 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 drove up to the corner and stopped, two shooters, later identified as Tyzir Hamilton and Treizon Thompson, exited. Both ran toward the victims, firing multiple

gunshots. The driver, later identified as Darnell Davis, remained in the car. Hamilton and Thompson then chased after Irizarry as he ran into the street, continuing to shoot at him. When Irizarry fell to the ground after suffering a gunshot wound, they both continued to shoot at him as he lay on the ground. Afterward, Hamilton and Thompson returned to the suspect vehicle, which fled.

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.

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.

At the time of the arrest of all three suspects in October 2020, Prosecutor Onofri praised the investigative work of the Mercer County Homicide Task Force 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," he stated. "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."

Mercer County Deputy First Assistant Prosecutor Kathleen M. Petrucci and Executive Assistant Prosecutor Michael C. Borgos represented the state during the three-week trial before Mercer County Superior Court Judge Peter E. Warshaw.

The investigation was led by the Mercer County Homicide Task Force and Sgt. Richard Sheppard of the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office. The defendant was represented by Mark Fury, Esq.

Hamilton is scheduled to be sentenced on January 4, 2024, along with Thompson, 23, who was tried in December 2022 and also found guilty on all counts. They each face a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. Davis, 22, previously pleaded guilty to aggravated manslaughter and is pending sentencing.

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Tyzir Hamilton