

# *News Release*

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## **Travis Maurice Hurst guilty of Murder-sentenced to 39 years**

**Charleston, S.C.** – Ninth Judicial Circuit Solicitor Scarlett A. Wilson announced today that a Charleston County jury found Travis Maurice Hurst (DOB 9/22/1985) of North Charleston guilty of Murder (§ 16-3-10). In South Carolina, murder carries a potential sentence ranging from a minimum of 30 years to a maximum of life. Upon the conviction, Circuit Court Judge J.C. Nicholson, Jr. sentenced Hurst to thirty-nine years in prison for his involvement in the shooting death of 24-year-old Roni Perez-Ricardez. Hurst will not be eligible for parole.

In the early morning hours of August 10 2007, Perez-Ricardez was confronted by three armed men as he walked by the Johnson Cemetery located on Stall Road in North Charleston. Perez-Ricardez was shot once in the chest through the heart and once in the back. A forensic pathologist testified that either wound would have been fatal. An expert firearms examiner from the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) opined that two weapons were used in the shooting.

Hurst was linked to the shooting by fingerprint evidence found in a van abandoned near the cemetery. The van was identified by witnesses as fleeing from the shooting. Ammunition of the type used to shoot the victim was found in the van. In the days after the homicide Hurst told several witnesses that he had committed the shooting. Hurst denied committing the murder to police and blamed his co-defendants.

The case was tried by Ninth Circuit Assistant Solicitors Greg Voigt and Michael Nelson. “Fortunately, the defendant confessed to his friends,” explained Voigt. “He told the jury Hurst “dragged other witnesses into the case because he could not keep his mouth shut” about killing the victim and that “every mark and wound on Perez-

Richardez's body was evidence of Hurst's malice." At his sentencing, Hurst addressed the court to ask only that he be housed nearby so that his family could visit him.

"The two other suspects are charged and will be tried at a later date," said Ninth Judicial Circuit Solicitor Scarlett A. Wilson. The case was prosecuted under the legal principle that the hand of one is the hand of all, which covers homicides involving multiple participants.

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