

# *News Release*

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## JUDGE SENTENCES ADRIAN BEATON TO 35 YEARS FOR MURDER, KIDNAPPING, BURGLARY 1<sup>st</sup>, and ASSAULT AND BATTERY WITH INTENT TO KILL

**Charleston, S.C.** – On January 26, 2012, Circuit Court Judge Thomas Hughston sentenced 22 year old Adrian Beaton to 35 years for murder, kidnapping, burglary in the first degree, and assault and battery with the intent to kill for events involving a home invasion that occurred at Marsh Oaks Apartments in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

On March 11, 2010, Beaton entered Jose Contrerras' kitchen window while Contrerras slept in his bedroom. Beaton then let his accomplices in the front door. Mr. Contrerras was awakened by the men who demanded drugs and money. The men bound Contrerras' feet and hands with phone cords, and he was forced to lay face down on his bed while his apartment was ransacked. Contrerras was shocked with a taser gun and also received injuries when Beaton hit him in the head with a pistol. Beaton put the gun to the back of Contrerras' neck and threatened him as the men searched the apartment.

In the midst of the attack on Contrerras, Contrerras' friends Oscar Girdon and his wife Leticia Herrera came to the apartment to pick up Contrerras to run errands. As they entered the apartment, the condition of the apartment alarmed them, and Girdon sought out Contrerras to make sure he was okay. Beaton, upon seeing Girdon approach the bedroom, shot Girdon twice, once in the leg and once in the chest. Girdon died from his injuries. As Herarra turned to flee, Beaton shot her once in the chest. Herrera survived.

All three men fled the scene. Area schools were put on lockdown as the police searched for the silver Dodge Magnum that the assailants fled in. Prosecutor Jennifer Kneece Shealy stated, "Meticulous crime scene analysis led to a DNA match to Beaton from swabs taken from the cords used to bind Contrerras. The DNA led to Beaton's arrest and eventual conviction." Beaton has two previous burglary charges.

Ninth Circuit Solicitor Scarlett Wilson said, "the Mount Pleasant Police Department should be commended for their thorough investigative efforts and excellent police work involved in bringing Adrian Beaton to justice." Beaton was represented by Public Defender Ashley Pennington.

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