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Jury Convicts Karseem Hardaway of Murder; Judge Sentences him to 40 years in Prison

Charleston, S.C.-- Solicitor Scarlett Wilson announced today that a Charleston jury found Karseem Hardaway guilty of Murder and Possession of a Weapon During a Violent Crime following a jury trial last week. Hardaway faced a minimum of 30 years and a maximum of Life in Prison Without Parole on the charge of murder. He was sentenced to 40 years in prison by the Honorable Deadra L. Jefferson. Solicitor Wilson stated, "This case shows that circumstantial evidence can provide good, strong proof of guilt and is sometimes stronger than eyewitness testimony."

Assistant Solicitors Kelly Barber and Chad Simpson prosecuted the case against Hardaway, assisted by Investigator Charles Jolliff. Mr. Hardaway was represented by Racheal Arora of the Charleston County Public Defenders' Office. During the jury trial, it was recounted that 59-year-old David Conner was shot in the back of the head by Hardaway. Evidence revealed the two shared a brief verbal confrontation the night before over Hardaway talking too loudly on his phone near Conner's apartment door in the Bolton's Landing apartment complex in West Ashley. The confrontation did not end well, leading Mr. Conner to leave a voicemail with the apartment complex's front office that night requesting assistance in dealing with the situation.

Shortly following the murder, Karseem Hardaway told police that he left the apartment complex on the day of the murder at 5:04 p.m., well before the killing, with nearby Ring camera footage showed him leaving his sister's apartment. Other surveillance videos, however, revealed that he in fact waited over half an hour near the victim's apartment until Mr. Conner arrived home and did not leave the area until just after the victim's murder at 5:32 p.m. The investigation heavily relied on the field of digital forensics, which revealed that Mr. Hardaway performed numerous online searches related to the victim's employment location and vehicle details, beginning just after the verbal confrontation and up to moments before Mr. Conner's murder. Furthermore, a single shell casing of distinctive caliber (10 millimeters) was located at the scene of the murder. Digital forensics and other web-based data revealed that Mr. Hardaway possessed a handgun of this unusual caliber prior to the murder and acted quickly to sell the handgun afterward. This and other evidence amounted to overwhelming proof of Mr. Hardaway's guilt.

The Ninth Circuit Solicitor's office is especially appreciative of the victim's wife, who has shown great patience and restraint throughout a difficult criminal process. The office also appreciates the hard work of the City of Charleston Police Department, particularly lead investigator Daniel Wilson and the agency's digital forensics unit. Both played crucial roles in the investigation and trial presentation.

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