

State of South Carolina



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SCARLETT A. WILSON

Solicitor, Ninth Judicial Circuit

Courtney Richards Convicted of Murder and Sentenced to 45 Years

Charleston, S.C. – Solicitor Scarlett Wilson announced today that a Charleston jury found Courtney Richards guilty of Murder and Possession of a Weapon During the Commission of a Violent Crime following a four-day jury trial last week. Richards faced a minimum of 30 years and a maximum of Life in Prison Without Parole on the charge of murder. Solicitor Wilson stated, “Uninvolved, innocent bystanders made this case. They along with the teamwork of prosecutors and NCPD investigators brought the community this verdict. The jury paid close attention to the evidence presented at trial and delivered Richards the justice he deserved.”

Assistant Solicitors Stephanie Linder and Anna Outten prosecuted the case against Richards, assisted by Investigator Erin Meyer. Bill McGuire and Scott Bishoff represented Richards. During the jury trial, evidence showed that Richards shot at 18-year old Javon Thomas at least six times, striking the fatal blow to the back of the head.

In February 2022, victim Javon Thomas was walking down the street in the Union Heights neighborhood mid-day with his girlfriend. The Defendant drove down the street, passing the Javon and his girlfriend, before pulling his car over. The Defendant exited his vehicle while armed with a gun and yelled at Javon from further down the block. The Defendant then shot at Javon. In return, Javon, returned fire while backing away, and then running away. The Defendant continued to shoot at Javon while Javon was running away.

The defense claimed that Richards acted in self-defense. The jury ultimately agreed with the State and convicted Mr. Richards of Murder and Possession of a Weapon During the Commission of a Violent Crime. Judge William McMaster sentenced Richards to a total of 45 years in prison.

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