

Floyd Slater, Jr. Sentenced

Friday, May 4, 2018

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Floyd Slater, Jr., 26, of Brooktondale, New York, appeared in Tompkins County Court today and was sentenced to a term of six (6) years in State Prison in connection with his conviction for the crime of Attempted Burglary in the Second Degree and Public Lewdness. Additionally, the Court imposed a period of five (5) years of Post Release Supervision. Attempted Burglary in the Second Degree, the top charge, is a Class D Felony in New York State, punishable by up to seven years in prison.

On February 15, 2018, Cornell Police officers responded to a dormitory on campus, where the defendant was reported to have been masturbating in the women's bathroom in front of a female resident. Slater was later identified to be the perpetrator and was charged on March 6, 2018.

Judge John C. Rowley presided over the case. Assistant District Attorney Diane Lama prosecuted the case and Ithaca attorney Jerome Mayersak represented the defendant.

Van Houten said, "Based upon the totality of the circumstances and the pattern of this individual's behavior, six years in prison is an appropriate sentence. This resolution promotes the safety and well-being of the community."

The District Attorney's Office recognizes and thanks the agencies who conducted the investigation and assisted in the prosecution of this case, specifically the Cornell University Police Department and the Ithaca Police Department.

Darryl Bradshaw Plea

Thursday, May 3, 2018

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Darryl Bradshaw, 23, of Ithaca, appeared in Tompkins County Court yesterday and entered a guilty plea to the crime of Robbery in the Third Degree. Robbery in the Third Degree is a Class D Felony under the New York State Penal Law. No weapons were used or displayed during the robbery.

Bradshaw admitted to forcibly stealing a woman's purse on April 1, 2018 in the City of Ithaca. He was arrested on April 5th, 2018. Bradshaw has been remanded to the Tompkins County Jail without bail, pending sentencing. State prison is mandatory under the sentencing guidelines.

Van Houten said, "I would like to recognize the Ithaca Police Department for their thorough and effective investigation which resulted in an arrest within a few days of the incident. The investigations unit should be commended for their excellent work solving this case. It's extremely satisfying to be able to return the victim's rosary beads and religious medallions and to provide swift consequences to such disgraceful criminal conduct."

Sentencing has been scheduled for June 6, 2018 before Judge John C. Rowley.

John Greenwood Plea

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that John P.A. Greenwood, 20, of Toronto, Canada, appeared in Ithaca City Court today and entered a plea of guilty to the offense of Disorderly Conduct in resolution of the pending charges.

Greenwood was originally charged with the misdemeanors of Attempted Assault in the Third Degree as a Hate Crime, Aggravated Harassment in the Second Degree and Criminal Mischief in the Fourth Degree arising out of an altercation in Collegetown on September 15, 2017.

Pretrial suppression hearings were scheduled to commence on April 17, 2018. The plea was entered before Judge Richard M. Wallace. New York City attorneys Ronald Fischetti and Eric Franz, as well as Ithaca attorney John A. Stevens represented the defendant.

Greenwood admitted that, with the intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm, or recklessly creating a risk thereof, in a public place he used abusive or obscene language, specifically the “N-word” in the early morning hours of September 15, 2017, in the City of Ithaca.

The Court ordered Greenwood to perform 75 hours of community service and to pay restitution as part of a Conditional Discharge. A full stay-away order of protection was issued in favor of the victim.

Van Houten said, “This is an extremely complex case from a legal standpoint. I believe that there was a good faith basis to charge the defendant with a hate crime but this resolution is fair to the victim and the community. No one contests that the defendant, John Greenwood, used racial slurs and acted reprehensibly on September 15th, 2017. Those facts, alone, do not equate to proof beyond a reasonable doubt that a hate crime was committed, however. The fact that the victim, who is a person of color, pursued the defendant onto the defendant’s property, with the intention of confronting Greenwood about his offensive language, creates a level of doubt whether the victim was selected based upon his race. Additionally, alcohol was a significant factor in this altercation.”

Van Houten continued, “Ultimately, my responsibility in this case is to advocate for the victim and to respect his wishes with regard to the prosecution of this case. The victim is a young man who simply wants to focus on his education at Cornell and to avoid the continued stress of this litigation. Based upon extensive discussions with the victim and with the approval of his parents, we agreed to resolve the case in this manner instead of proceeding to trial. I certainly understand that there are members of this community who believe that John Greenwood should be punished severely for his conduct, and I respect that point of view. There is no excuse for such deplorable behavior at Cornell University, in Tompkins County, or anywhere for that matter. We cannot allow our emotional reaction to outweigh an objective analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence and we cannot substitute our own feelings for those of the victim, who fully supports this resolution.”

The District Attorney's Office recognizes and thanks the agencies who conducted the investigation and assisted in the prosecution of this case, specifically the Ithaca Police Department, and the New York State Police, Troop C BCI and Forensic Investigation Unit.

Michael Davis Sentenced

Friday, March 23, 2018

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Michael Davis, 47, of Ithaca, appeared in Tompkins County Court today and was sentenced to the maximum sentence allowed by law, a term of 25 years to life in State Prison in connection with his conviction for the crime of Murder in the Second Degree. Murder in the Second Degree is a Class A-I Felony in New York State, punishable by a maximum of 25 years to life. Judge John C. Rowley presided over the case. Deputy District Attorney Andrew Bonavia and Assistant District Attorney Diane Lama prosecuted the case. James Baker and Russell Maines represented the defendant. Davis admitted to intentionally causing the death of Joezaya Berrios in the early morning hours of June 13, 2017, in the City of Ithaca. Van Houten said, "We are pleased that the Court imposed the maximum sentence. As stated very powerfully by Josie's family and by Andrew Bonavia in their sentencing remarks, we all need to remember that Josie was loved and she was wanted. She was a bright light in our community who helped countless people with her positive energy, confidence, and courage. She will never be forgotten." The District Attorney's Office recognizes and thanks the agencies who conducted the investigation and assisted in the prosecution of this case, specifically the Ithaca Police Department, the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office, and the New York State Police, Troop C BCI, and Forensic Investigation Unit.

Michael Davis Plea

Friday, February 2, 2018

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Michael Davis, 46, of Ithaca, appeared in Tompkins County Court today and entered a plea of guilty to the crime of Murder in the Second Degree. Murder in the Second Degree is a Class A-I Felony in New York State, punishable by a minimum of 15 years to life and a maximum of 25 years to life. The People will ask the Court to sentence Davis to the maximum sentence permitted by law.

Davis was required to waive his right to appeal as part of the plea.

Jury selection in the case was scheduled to commence on March 12, 2018. Deputy District Attorney Andrew Bonavia and Assistant District Attorney Diane Lama are the prosecutors assigned to the case. James Baker and Russell Maines represent the defendant.

Davis admitted to intentionally causing the death of Jozaya Berrios in the early morning hours of June 13, 2017, in the City of Ithaca. He remains incarcerated in the Tompkins County Jail pending sentencing.

Van Houten said, "There is nothing that will truly amount to justice in this tragic case. However, the fact that the defendant accepted responsibility, pleading guilty to a Class A-I Felony and waiving his right to appeal, thereby saving the family and the community the trauma of enduring a lengthy trial, is an outcome that is certainly one that advances public safety and will appropriately punish the defendant for his crime."

The District Attorney's Office recognizes and thanks the agencies who conducted the investigation and assisted in the prosecution of this case, specifically the Ithaca Police Department, the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office, and the New York State Police, Troop C BCI and Forensic Investigation Unit.

Sentencing has been scheduled for March 23, 2018 before Judge John Rowley.

Ray Dennis Sentenced

Monday, January 22, 2018

Tompkins County District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced that Ray J. Dennis, 49, was sentenced on January 16th, 2018, to a term of 10 years in state prison followed by 15 years of post-release supervision, for the attempted rape of a 14-year-old girl.

Acting County Court Judge Scott A. Miller found Dennis guilty of Attempted Rape in the First Degree and Endangering the Welfare of a Child on November 15, 2017, after a two-day non-jury trial. Assistant District Attorney Kristen Grabowski prosecuted the case. Attorney Thomas H. Kheel represented the defendant.

“I want to commend Kristen Grabowski for her excellent work in securing a conviction in this case. This sentence provides a significant level of closure and justice for the victim and her family.”

The case was investigated by the Tompkins County Sheriff’s Office.

Justin Barkley Plea

Friday, January 12, 2018

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Justin R. Barkley, 39, of Ithaca, appeared in Tompkins County Court yesterday afternoon, January 11, 2018, and entered guilty pleas to the crimes of Manslaughter in the First Degree and Menacing a Police Officer. As a requirement of the plea, the defendant will be sentenced to 25 years in state prison, which is the maximum legal sentence, for the Manslaughter in the First Degree conviction and 8 years in state prison for the Menacing a Police Officer conviction, also the maximum legal sentence. A five year term of post release supervision will be imposed after Barkley completes his prison sentence.

Barkley was required to waive his right to appeal as part of the plea.

Assistant District Attorney Eliza Filipowski and District Attorney Van Houten prosecuted the case, and Peter Dumas from Malone, New York represented the defendant.

Barkley admitted to intentionally causing the death of William Schumacher on December 8, 2016 at the Walmart store in the City of Ithaca. Barkley also admitted to firing his rifle in the direction of police officers who had pursued him back to his residence in the Town of Dryden. He remains incarcerated in the Tompkins County Jail pending sentencing.

William Schumacher has been referred to in the media as a UPS driver but he was far more than that. William Schumacher was a family man, a loving father, grandfather, uncle, brother and faithful friend. William Schumacher was a good Samaritan and a devout Christian and his legacy will live on through all who knew him.

District Attorney Van Houten stated “I strongly believe that this plea is a measure of justice in what is a profoundly tragic case. The most important thing is that Justin Barkley will be sentenced to 25 years in state prison. We have to recognize that the defendant’s mental health played a major role in what took place. The acknowledgement by the defendant that he acted intentionally, together with the extensive investigation we conducted, including a full psychiatric evaluation by our own expert, support the conclusion that the defendant was suffering from what New York State law recognizes as an extreme emotional disturbance. We would not have permitted the defendant to plead guilty to Manslaughter in the First Degree without a guarantee that he would receive the maximum sentence of 25 years in prison.”

The District Attorney’s Office recognizes and thanks the agencies who conducted the investigation and assisted in the prosecution of this case, specifically the Ithaca Police Department, including the Ithaca Police SWAT Unit, the Tompkins County Sheriff’s Office, including the Corrections Division of the Sheriff’s Department, the Cayuga Heights Police Department, the Syracuse Police Department, Tompkins County Mental Health Department, and the New York State Police, Troop C BCI and Forensic Investigation Unit.

Sentencing has been scheduled for February 13, 2018 before Judge John Rowley.

Joaquin A. Jones Sentenced

May 7, 2018

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Yakez D. Cornett, 22, of Ithaca, appeared in Tompkins County Court today and entered guilty pleas to the crimes of Assault in the First Degree and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree. Assault in the First Degree is a Class B Violent Felony under the New York State Penal Law, punishable by a sentence of between five (5) and twenty-five (25) years in state prison. Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree is a Class C Violent Felony, punishable by a sentence of three and one half (3 ½) to fifteen (15) years.

Cornett admitted to possessing a .380 semi-automatic handgun, which he used to shoot a man on the Ithaca Commons during the early morning hours of April 9, 2017, causing the man to suffer a serious physical injury. He has been remanded to the Tompkins County Jail pending sentencing.

The Ithaca Police Department conducted the investigation with assistance and support from the Tompkins County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police.

Sentencing has been scheduled for October 27, 2017 before Judge John Rowley.

Chaio B. Slater Sentenced

July 18, 2018

Tompkins County District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Chaio B. Slater, 32, of Ithaca, appeared in Tompkins County Court and was sentenced to seven (7) years in prison in connection with his conviction of two counts of Robbery in the Second Degree.

Slater admitted to robbing the Tompkins Trust Company branch located on South Meadow Street in the City of Ithaca on December 5, 2017.

Slater also admitted to robbing the CFCU branch located on Sheraton Drive in the Village of Lansing on January 17, 2018.

In both cases, Slater displayed what appeared to be a black pistol and demanded money from bank personnel. During the investigation, police discovered evidence that the black pistol was likely a pellet gun, purchased by Slater at a local retailer on the day of the first robbery.

Slater paid full restitution to both financial institutions prior to sentencing. Van Houten said, “Based upon all the circumstances, this is a fair resolution of this case. A sentence of seven years in prison sends a strong deterrent message against this kind of criminal activity.”

Van Houten continued, “The resolution of this case can be credited to the combined efforts of the Ithaca Police Department, Tompkins County Sheriff’s Office, Cornell University Police, Federal Bureau of Investigations and the New York State Police. The collaborative relationship between the law enforcement agencies in Tompkins County is truly an asset to this community.”

Judge John C. Rowley presided over the case.

Chaio B. Slater Plea

June 4, 2018

Tompkins County District Attorney Matthew Van Houten today that Chaio B. Slater, 32, of Ithaca, appeared in Tompkins County Court and pled guilty to two counts of Robbery in the Second Degree. Robbery in the Second Degree is a Class C Felony under the New York State Penal Law.

Slater admitted to robbing the Tompkins Trust Company branch located on South Meadow Street in the City of Ithaca on December 5, 2017.

Slater also admitted to robbing the CFCU branch located on Sheraton Drive in the Village of Lansing on January 17, 2018.

A Tompkins County Grand Jury indicted Slater for two counts of Robbery in the First Degree in February of this year.

In both cases, Slater displayed what appeared to be a black pistol and demanded money from bank personnel. During the investigation, police discovered evidence that the black pistol was likely a pellet gun, purchased by Slater at a local retailer on the day of the first robbery.

Penal Law Section 160.15(4) states that the defendant is entitled to a reduction from Robbery in the First Degree to Robbery in the Second Degree if the defendant can present evidence that he did not display an actual, loaded and operational firearm during the robbery. Van Houten stated, "Based upon the overwhelming evidence that Chaio Slater was the individual who robbed both banks, combined with the expectation that the defendant would be able to establish that he did not display a real, loaded firearm, this resolution represents the best possible outcome that we could have expected from a trial."

Slater has been remanded to the Tompkins County Jail pending sentencing. The minimum sentence for each count is three and a half (3 ½) years in State Prison.

Van Houten said, "The resolution of this case can be credited to the combined efforts of the Ithaca Police Department, Tompkins County Sheriffs Office, Cornell University Police, Federal Bureau of Investigations and the New York State Police. The collaborative relationship between the law enforcement agencies in Tompkins County is truly an asset to this community."

Sentencing has been scheduled for July 13, 2018 before Judge John C. Rowley.

Michael B. Baker Conviction

August 23, 2018

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Michael B. Baker, 27, of Groton, was convicted by a jury of Sexual Abuse in the Second Degree after a trial in the Lansing Town Court. The jury arrived at the verdict on August 22, 2018.

Baker was found guilty of subjecting another person to sexual contact when that person is legally incapable of consent. At the time of the offense, Baker was employed as a corrections officer at the Tompkins County Jail and the victim was a female inmate in the custody of the local correctional facility. As a result of the conviction, Baker will be required to register as a sex offender.

Sentencing has been scheduled for October 10, 2018 before Judge W. David Banfield.

Assistant District Attorney Daniel Johnson prosecuted the case. Thomas Kheel was the defendant's attorney. The Tompkins County Sheriff's Office conducted the investigation.

Chaio B. Slater Plea

June 4, 2018

Tompkins County District Attorney Matthew Van Houten today that Chaio B. Slater, 32, of Ithaca, appeared in Tompkins County Court and pled guilty to two counts of Robbery in the Second Degree. Robbery in the Second Degree is a Class C Felony under the New York State Penal Law.

Slater admitted to robbing the Tompkins Trust Company branch located on South Meadow Street in the City of Ithaca on December 5, 2017.

Slater also admitted to robbing the CFCU branch located on Sheraton Drive in the Village of Lansing on January 17, 2018.

A Tompkins County Grand Jury indicted Slater for two counts of Robbery in the First Degree in February of this year.

In both cases, Slater displayed what appeared to be a black pistol and demanded money from bank personnel. During the investigation, police discovered evidence that the black pistol was likely a pellet gun, purchased by Slater at a local retailer on the day of the first robbery.

Penal Law Section 160.15(4) states that the defendant is entitled to a reduction from Robbery in the First Degree to Robbery in the Second Degree if the defendant can present evidence that he did not display an actual, loaded and operational firearm during the robbery. Van Houten stated, "Based upon the overwhelming evidence that Chaio Slater was the individual who robbed both banks, combined with the expectation that the defendant would be able to establish that he did not display a real, loaded firearm, this resolution represents the best possible outcome that we could have expected from a trial."

Slater has been remanded to the Tompkins County Jail pending sentencing. The minimum sentence for each count is three and a half (3 ½) years in State Prison.

Van Houten said, "The resolution of this case can be credited to the combined efforts of the Ithaca Police Department, Tompkins County Sheriffs Office, Cornell University Police, Federal Bureau of Investigations and the New York State Police. The collaborative relationship between the law enforcement agencies in Tompkins County is truly an asset to this community."

Sentencing has been scheduled for July 13, 2018 before Judge John C. Rowley.