

'Justice For Darian:' Jury Finds George Lacey Guilty In First-Degree Murder Trial

by Sanford Schmidt

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EDWARDSVILLE - A Madison County jury Friday found Collinsville man - George Lacey - guilty of first-degree murder in the shooting death of Darian A. Woods, 23, also of Collinsville.

On November 19, 2020, Collinsville Police found Woods dead from a gunshot wound after a report of a home invasion.

The jury deliberated for several hours on Thursday and also between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Friday.

Circuit Kyle Napp ordered a pre-sentencing investigation. She said she will set a sentencing date at a later time.

Lacey was not guilty on all his counts. He was found guilty of first-degree murder and possession of a firearm by a felon, but he was not convicted on the counts of robbery and home invasion.

“I am glad it is all over we got justice for Darian,” said Lauren Swearingen, Darian’s girlfriend, and the lead witness in the case.

She carefully described the night of horror as one of Lacey’s co-defendants held her down while Lacey robbed and fatally shot the victim.

Bryan Callahan, another family member, said: “We got the most serious charge conviction and that is what we wanted.”