

Haine Announces Guilty Verdict In Shooting Murder Of Teen

by Brian Brueggemann
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EDWARDSVILLE - Madison County State's Attorney Thomas A. Haine announced Friday that a jury convicted a Granite City man of murder in the shooting death of a Madison teen in 2020. The jury on Friday found Nicholas Rickman III, 18, guilty of first-degree murder and armed robbery.

A codefendant, 19-year-old Deandre Richardson, had previously pleaded guilty to first-degree murder. The jury found that Rickman and Richardson together robbed and murdered 18-year-old Sean D. Williams of Madison.

Williams was fatally shot on June 4, 2020, outside a residence in the 2500 block of Madison Avenue in Granite City. Several family members of Williams were in the courtroom for the verdict. They tearfully hugged Assistant State's Attorney Morgan Hudson and Assistant State's Attorney Katie Warren.

"This conviction won't heal the family's wound, but we're happy that at least we were able to bring Sean's killers to justice," Haine said. "We're thankful for the hard work and due diligence of the jury and judge in this case. Also, the prosecutors, Morgan Hudson and Katie Warren, should be very proud of their excellent and successful efforts here."

Hudson, in her closing argument, noted that Rickman turned off his phone for five days after the killing, while police were attempting to locate him, and he shaved his hair. "You don't run if you've done nothing wrong. You don't hide if you've done nothing wrong. You don't change your appearance if you've done nothing wrong," Hudson argued. "He ran, he hid and he changed his appearance," Hudson said Rickman was a friend of Williams but lured Williams to the residence to rob him of marijuana and money. "With friends like him, who needs enemies?" the prosecutor argued.

Haine said afterward, "This was a complicated case with many moving parts. But even with complicated cases, this office always strives to bring justice for victims of crime." Haine thanked Granite City Police, the Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis, Illinois State Police and the Madison County Coroner's Office for gathering evidence – much of it technological – to secure the conviction.

"The hard work of more than two dozen investigators over many hours culminated today with this guilty verdict," Haine said. "The citizens of Madison County can be very proud of their police agencies, who work every day to keep them safe and bring violent criminals to justice."

Rickman will be sentenced later. The sentencing range for first-degree murder is 20 to 60 years in prison. The co-defendant, 19-year-old Deandre J. Richardson of Granite City, pleaded guilty earlier this year and will be sentenced late