

Haine Announces 32-Year Prison Term For Convicted Murderer

by Brian Brueggemann
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EDWARDSVILLE — A judge has handed a 32-year prison term to a Granite City man for the murder of a Madison teen in 2020, Madison County State’s Attorney Tom Haine announced Monday. Nicholas Rickman III, 18, received the sentence in connection with the fatal shooting of 18-year-old Sean D. Williams.

In October, prosecutors won a jury conviction against Rickman on charges of first-degree murder and armed robbery. At a sentencing hearing Thursday, prosecutors asked

the judge to impose the maximum sentence. The maximum sentence available in this case was 40 years in prison, due to Rickman being 16 at the time of the offense.

“Understandably, for the family and loved ones of Sean, no sentence could possibly feel adequate. Their loss is immeasurable,” Haine said. “Yet I hope that this conviction and sentence will help them begin to heal.”

A codefendant, 19-year-old Deandre Richardson, previously pleaded guilty to first-degree murder. The jury found that Rickman and Richardson together robbed and murdered Williams outside a residence in the 2500 block of Madison Avenue in Granite City.

At trial, Assistant State’s Attorney Morgan Hudson and Assistant State’s Attorney Katie Warren presented evidence and testimony showing that Rickman and Williams were friends, but Rickman lured Williams to the residence to rob him of marijuana and money. The prosecutors presented evidence that Rickman tried to hide from police in the days after the killing by turning off his phone and shaving his hair.

In a victim-impact statement to the court, Sean’s grandfather, Harold Wilson Sr., said Sean was a singer who had been offered a recording contract. As a backup plan, he was considering enlistment with the Air Force, as an uncle had done. Sean was recalled as helpful and loving to his family.

“Sean’s murder has been devastating on our entire family,” Harold Wilson Sr. stated. Sean’s mother, Shawndell Williams, also gave a victim-impact statement, saying her faith has allowed her to find forgiveness.

“I’ve suffered, yet survived one of the most traumatic hardships of my life with the loss of my youngest son,” Williams stated. Haine commended the work of prosecutors Hudson and Warren, along with Granite City Police, the Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis, Illinois State Police, and the Madison County Coroner’s Office.