

## Jovon Monk Conviction

January 14, 2022

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Jovon L. Monk, 36, of Lansing, was convicted by a jury on Wednesday afternoon of the crimes of Rape in the First Degree and Criminal Sexual Act in the First Degree, both Class B felonies, as well as Sexual Abuse in the First Degree, a Class D Felony.

Monk was convicted of all charges after a jury trial in the Tompkins County Court. The trial commenced on January 3, 2022, and concluded on Wednesday, January 12, 2022.

Sentencing has been scheduled for March 15, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. before Judge Scott A. Miller.

Assistant District Attorney Veronica Fox prosecuted the case. Kevin Kelly represented the defendant.

## Robert J. DeFelice Plea

January 21, 2022

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Robert J. DeFelice, 38, of Ithaca, appeared in Tompkins County Court yesterday afternoon and entered a guilty plea to the crime of Aggravated Vehicular Homicide, a Class B Felony. DeFelice pleaded guilty to the most serious count of the indictment and waived his right to appeal.

The maximum possible sentence is a term of eight and a third to twenty-five years in New York State prison.

DeFelice admitted to driving recklessly while operating a motor vehicle under the influence of cocaine and with a blood alcohol content greater than .18%, on July 21, 2021 in the Town of Ithaca. DeFelice drove his vehicle over the fog line onto the shoulder of Route 96 near Indian Creek Farm, into the path of four young girls who were walking on the shoulder, striking two of the girls and causing the death of fourteen-year-old Sophia Nickerson.

Sophia Nickerson was a student at the Lehman Alternative Community School and was a beloved daughter, grand-daughter, niece, sister and friend to many.

Van Houten said, "I would like to recognize the members of the community who stepped forward in the immediate wake of this tragedy to provide care to the victims and to ensure that the perpetrator was caught. Additionally, the professional response of both the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office and the Ithaca Police Department ensured that the defendant was brought to justice. It is meaningful that the defendant pleaded guilty to the most serious charge. While nothing can make this tragedy less painful for the victim's family, the defendant's acceptance of responsibility represents a small measure of justice."

Assistant District Attorney Daniel Johnson prosecuted the case and Jason Leifer represented the defendant.

Sentencing has been scheduled for March 3, 2022 at 2:00 p.m. before County Court Judge Joseph R. Cassidy.

## Eric Deas Conviction

Monday, June 13, 2016

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Eric N. Deas, 56, of Ithaca, was convicted by a jury on Tuesday, February 22, 2022 of Assault in the First Degree, a Class B violent felony, and Aggravated Sexual Abuse in the Second Degree, a Class C violent felony.

Deas was convicted of all crimes after a jury trial in the Tompkins County Court. The trial commenced on February 14, 2022, and concluded on Tuesday, February 22, 2022.

Van Houten said, “I would like to recognize the extraordinary efforts of ADA Veronica Fox, specifically her untiring advocacy for the victim of this extremely traumatic case.”

Sentencing has been scheduled for April 4, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. at the Tompkins County Courthouse before the Honorable John C. Rowley.

Assistant District Attorney Veronica E. Fox prosecuted the case. Patrick Kilker, Esq. of Vestal, represented the defendant.

## Garaus Henry Plea

March 1, 2022

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Garaus A. Henry, 27, of Lansing, appeared in Tompkins County Court on Thursday morning, February 24, 2022, and entered a guilty plea to the crimes of Manslaughter in the Second Degree, a Class C Felony and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, a Class C Violent Felony. The case had been scheduled for jury selection starting that morning.

The maximum possible sentence for the Manslaughter conviction is an indeterminate term of five to fifteen years in New York State prison.

An indeterminate sentence means that the defendant is sentenced to a range with a minimum and maximum amount of time in prison. For example, if a defendant is sentenced to a term of five to fifteen years, he must serve at least five years before being eligible for parole and the remainder of the sentence would be served on parole. A defendant is not guaranteed to be released on parole after five years and could serve up to ten years before being released on parole for the remainder of the sentence.

In this case, as a condition of the plea, Garaus Henry will be sentenced to the maximum term of five to fifteen years in state prison for the Manslaughter conviction and a concurrent term of three and a half years in prison for the Criminal Possession of a Weapon conviction.

Henry admitted to firing an illegal handgun on March 13, 2021, during an exchange of gunfire and high-speed chase through the Town of Lansing, which ended in the two vehicles being completely demolished. Sha-heem Harris, 21, of Elmira, died from multiple blunt force trauma suffered during the automobile accident.

Van Houten said, “The death of Sha-heem Harris was tragic and senseless. The acceptance of responsibility by the defendant is significant, as are the associated consequences. The conduct of everyone involved in this conflict, especially Garaus Henry, was reckless and unacceptable in our community. Unfortunately, a young man lost his life in the course of this completely avoidable incident.”

District Attorney Van Houten prosecuted the case and Ralph Franco, of Brooklyn, New York, represented the defendant.

Sentencing has been scheduled for June 24, 2022, before County Court Judge John C. Rowley.

## William L. Marshall Indictment

March 10, 2022

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that William L. Marshall, 40, of Ithaca, has been charged by the Tompkins County Grand Jury in a three-count indictment alleging that he committed the Class A-I Felony offense of Murder in the Second Degree, the Class C Felony offense of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree and the Class D Felony offense of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree.

The Grand Jury charged Marshall with the murder of Alan Godfrey at 206 Taughannock Boulevard in the City of Ithaca, on July 20, 2021.

Marshall was arraigned this afternoon before Tompkins County Court Judge Joseph R. Cassidy and has been held without bail pending trial.

The Ithaca Police Department, the New York State Police and the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office conducted the investigation.

\*\*\*\*\*

NOTE: An indictment, like any criminal charge, is solely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

## Jonathan A. Roberts Indictment

August 18, 2022

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Jonathan A. Roberts, 32, of Elmira, has been charged in a four-count indictment related to the motor vehicle collision which took place on Route 13 in the Town of Newfield in the early morning hours of March 19, 2022. Leon Arguello, a devoted father and talented local musician, died in the collision. Leon Arguello was 49 years old.

District Attorney Van Houten presented the case to the Tompkins County Grand Jury on August 11, 2022. Roberts was indicted for Manslaughter in the Second Degree, Criminally Negligent Homicide, Reckless Driving, and Leaving the Scene of a Personal Injury Accident without Reporting.

The top charge, Manslaughter in the Second Degree, is a Class C Felony for which the maximum penalty is an indeterminate sentence of five (5) to fifteen (15) years of imprisonment.

The Tompkins County Sheriff's Office was the lead agency in connection with the investigation and the Collision Reconstruction Unit of the New York State Police provided significant assistance and support.

\*\*\*\*\*

NOTE: An indictment, like any criminal charge, is solely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

## Christian Little Paz Indictment

October 12, 2022

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Christian L. Little-Paz, 36, of Ithaca, has been indicted for crimes arising from a home invasion on South Plain Street in the City of Ithaca, which took place in the early morning hours of October 1, 2022. District Attorney Van Houten presented the case to the Grand Jury on October 6, 2022.

Thomas was indicted by the Tompkins County Grand Jury for the felonies of Burglary in the First Degree, two counts of Robbery in the First Degree, Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree, and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree.

Burglary in the First Degree and Robbery in the First Degree are Class B Felony charges for which the maximum penalty is twenty-five (25) years imprisonment. Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree is a Class E Felony punishable by up to four years in prison and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree is a Class D felony punishable by up to seven years in prison.

The Ithaca Police Department was the lead agency in connection with the investigation, with assistance from the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office.

\*\*\*\*\*

NOTE: An indictment, like any criminal charge, is solely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

## Jeremiah L. Jordan Indictment

November 18, 2022

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Jeremiah L. Jordan, 39, of Ithaca, has been indicted by the Tompkins County Grand Jury in a three-count indictment charging him with Murder in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree and Tampering with Physical Evidence.

Jordan is charged with the stabbing death of Michael S. Monroe, 38, just after 1 a.m. on October 28, 2022, on the Six Mile Creek Walk near the Tompkins County Public Library in the City of Ithaca. He has been remanded to the Tompkins County Jail without bail.

The Ithaca Police Department and New York State Forensic Identification Unit conducted the investigation.

The maximum sentence available for Murder in the Second Degree is twenty-five years to life.

\*\*\*\*\*

NOTE: An indictment, like any criminal charge, is solely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.