

News Release

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Mt. Pleasant Armed Robbery Trial Ends With Three Convictions; Gunman and Accomplice Sent to Prison.

Charleston, S.C. – Solicitor Scarlett A. Wilson announced that on Friday, December 6, 2013, a Charleston County jury found defendants, Jarret Graddick (DOB 9/10/1987) and Keenan Coakley (DOB 5/2/1991) guilty of a 2010 armed robbery of the Phone Smart Cellphone Store located in the Oakland Plantation shopping center in Mt. Pleasant. Circuit Court Judge Markley Dennis sentenced Coakley to sixteen years and Graddick to twenty years on the charge.

The robbery occurred at approximately 6:30 p.m. on September 15th 2010, after the third codefendant, Kevin Smalls, (DOB 3/27/1986) dropped two men off near a wooded area close to the shopping center. The manager of the Phone Smart and his only employee saw two men wearing dark clothing and masks rushing toward the store's rear entrance. Before the men entered the store, both employees ran to a neighboring restaurant yelling for others to call the police. One woman, who had just finished loading her groceries into her car, heard the cries for help and noticed a suspicious car and driver with whom she made eye contact for a brief moment. Sensing that something wasn't right, she wrote down the license plate of the suspicious looking red and black Chevy Impala and reported what she saw to the police.

The same car was later seen by a resident on Sam Edward's road, picking up the two robbers, one of which was carrying something "tucked like a football" and threw the empty cash register by the wooded area in the one-road neighborhood.

Shortly after making its escape on Highway 17 towards Highway 41, officers of the Mt. Pleasant Police Department saw the car and confirmed the license plate tag number provided to the police minutes after the robbery. The officers conducted a "high-risk traffic stop," a term used to describe making contact with a car suspected to have been involved in a felony, such as an armed robbery. After ordering the driver out of the car without incident, officers saw Keenan Coakley attempt to jump in the front seat. Testimony of another individual inside the car said this was an effort to try to escape police apprehension. After all four men were taken from the car, officers found a pile of cash, as well as a loaded .40 caliber Glock handgun in the back seat of the car.

At trial, Assistant Solicitor Jennifer Kneece Shealy pointed to the fact that the knotted t-shirts used as masks and plastic gloves contained Coakley's and Graddick's DNA. "It slams them." She said as she argued in front of the jury, who convicted the two men of armed robbery on Friday. Smalls later pled to accessory after the fact shortly after Coakley and Graddick were sentenced.

Graddick has been convicted of Criminal Conspiracy in 2006, and is also charged with five counts of armed robbery and two counts of kidnapping in connection with the armed robbery of the Golden Bowl Chinese Restaurant and Piggly Wiggly in Mt. Pleasant. Coakley has pending two counts of armed robbery in connection with the armed robbery of the Golden Bowl Chinese Restaurant, as well as a grand larceny and possession with intent to distribute marijuana.

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