

# State of South Carolina



Charleston County  
101 Meeting Street, Suite 400  
Charleston, SC 29401  
Phone (843) 958-1900  
Fax (843) 958-1905

Berkeley County  
300-B California Avenue  
Moncks Corner, SC 29461  
Phone (843) 723-3800 ext. 4529  
Fax (843) 719-4588

## SCARLETT A. WILSON

*Solicitor, Ninth Judicial Circuit*

For Immediate Release  
January 10, 2019

### **Jury Convicts James Paquette of Criminal Sexual Conduct**

**Charleston, S.C. – On January 10, 2019,** Solicitor Scarlett Wilson announced that a Charleston County jury has found James Adam Paquette, age 55, guilty of Criminal Sexual Conduct in the Third Degree. The jury reached its verdict Thursday afternoon following a three-day trial. The Honorable D. Craig Brown sentenced Paquette to the maximum 10-year sentence. Paquette is also required to register as a sex offender. Solicitor Wilson stated, “The victim’s courage in quickly reporting this assault is what secured our conviction. We are grateful to her for standing strong and for showing others who have been abused that if they will work with us, we have a chance to convict sex offenders.”

Assistant Solicitors Alexandra Ginsburg and Jessica Baldwin prosecuted the case with the assistance of Ninth Circuit Solicitor’s Office investigators, Erin Meyer and Josh Cheney. The defendant and victim had known each other prior to the incident but did not have a sexual relationship. On the night of the assault, the two met at a local bar for drinks. After only an hour, the victim strangely appeared to be grossly intoxicated, and another friend drove her home. Without anyone’s knowledge, the defendant soon followed. Later in the evening, the victim’s friend returned to check on the victim. She noticed the light flicker off and someone move the curtains in the apartment. Thinking it was the victim, she tried to open the door.

The door was locked, so she peered through the door window and saw the defendant pushing open the victim’s legs and performing a sex act on the victim who was not moving and who was clearly unresponsive. The friend, in a state of panic, ran to neighbors for assistance and called others to come to the victim’s residence. They arrived and witnessed the defendant continuing to assault the victim while she was obviously incapacitated. They banged on the door and threatened to call law enforcement. Moments later, the defendant threw a blanket over the victim and cracked open the door. Before he could slam it shut, the friends were able to force their way into the residence. When inside, they found the victim naked from the waist down and unable to fully communicate.

Because the victim was incapacitated, she did not know what had happened to her. The next morning, her friends told her what they witnessed. The victim reported to MUSC where she submitted to a forensic sexual assault exam. When interviewed by police, the Defendant denied ever having had sexual relations with the victim and stated that he loved her “like his daughters.” Swabs from the victim’s genital area taken during the sexual assault exam revealed a DNA match to the defendant. Other evidence further contradicted the defendant’s description of the evening.

# State of South Carolina



Charleston County  
101 Meeting Street, Suite 400  
Charleston, SC 29401  
Phone (843) 958-1900  
Fax (843) 958-1905

Berkeley County  
300-B California Avenue  
Moncks Corner, SC 29461  
Phone (843) 723-3800 ext. 4529  
Fax (843) 719-4588

## **SCARLETT A. WILSON**

*Solicitor, Ninth Judicial Circuit*

*Cont... State vs James Adam Paquette*

Assistant Solicitor Alexandra Ginsburg stated, "Without the cooperation of the victim's friends and neighbors who were willing to speak up when they saw a wrong being committed, this case would have likely gone unreported and unprosecuted. I'm proud to be a part of this community and to be such a small part in providing closure to this victim and her friends." Detective Keith Herriott with Charleston County Sheriff's Office investigated the case.

###