

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 18, 2023

SPARTANBURG MAN SENTENCED TO LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE FOR ATTEMPTED MURDER

A Spartanburg man has been sentenced to life in prison without parole for Attempted Murder.

Cornelius Jerome Staggers, 32, was tried and found guilty of Attempted Murder, Assault and Battery in the First Degree, and Discharging a Firearm Into a Vehicle. The trial began on Monday in Spartanburg. Special Circuit Court Judge Daniel E. Martin, Jr. presided over the trial, received the jury's guilty verdict on all three (3) charges, and then issued the sentence on Thursday, August 17, 2023. Staggers received life in prison without parole for Attempted Murder as well as a ten (10) year sentence each for Assault and Battery in the First Degree and Discharging a Firearm Into a Vehicle. All sentences will run concurrent. Staggers was prosecuted by Assistant Solicitors Spenser Smith and Blythe Walters.

The crimes occurred on August 3, 2021, in the City of Spartanburg. Earlier that day the victim had an argument with a co-worker at their place of employment. When the victim met his wife in the parking lot to leave work, they were approached by Cornelius Jerome Staggers. Neither the victim nor his wife knew Mr. Staggers. Mr. Staggers threatened the victim and told the victim not to mess with his brother. As the victim and his wife left the parking lot they were followed by Mr. Staggers in a separate vehicle. Driving into the city, the victim and his wife stopped for a stop sign at the intersection of Wofford Street and Farley Avenue. While they were stationary, Mr. Staggers leaned out of the driver's side window of his vehicle and began firing a handgun at the victim and his wife. A bullet shattered the back window of the victim's vehicle and another bullet hit the passenger's side mirror.

Using information from the earlier workplace argument and surveillance video of the parking lot confrontation, officers with the Spartanburg Police Department developed Mr. Staggers as a suspect. The victim and his wife were able to identify Mr. Staggers as the person who confronted them in the parking lot, followed their vehicle, and shot at them. In an interview with law enforcement, Mr. Staggers admitted exchanging words with the victim in the parking lot but denied following or shooting at the victim and his wife.

Staggers' prior criminal history included convictions for two counts of Unlawful Carrying of a Handgun, two counts of Burglary in the Second Degree Violent, two counts of Attempted Armed Robbery, Possession of a Weapon During Commission of a Violent Crime, two counts of Assault and Battery in the Second Degree, Burglary in the Third Degree, Assault and Battery in the Third Degree, Trespassing, and Shoplifting.

Assistant Solicitor Spenser Smith noted "the victim and his wife could easily have been killed over a workplace argument that did not even involve the Defendant." Assistant Solicitor Smith added, "through the work of law enforcement and the judicial system, Mr. Staggers no longer has the ability to endanger the citizens of our community."

From the Office of Seventh Circuit Solicitor Barry J. Barnette; for more information, contact Amy Goulding at 864-596-2575 or agoulding@spartanburgcounty.org.

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