



NEWS RELEASE

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Man Sentenced to 60 Years in Prison in Drug Deal Murder

Dariques Hemphill was sentenced to 60 years in prison Tuesday for second-degree murder and first-degree assault a fatal shooting in Westminster in January 2018.

Hemphill (DOB 05/07/99) and Kerstie Arnold (11/14/98) had arranged a cocaine deal and to meet with the dealer in their vehicles in the parking lot of the Park Place Apartments at 9141 Federal Boulevard on January 5, 2018.

Instead of paying for the drugs, Hemphill and Arnold demanded that the occupants of the drug dealer's Chevrolet Equinox empty their pockets. Hemphill came to the driver's side of the Equinox and fired four shots in to the head and neck of 19-year-old Ricardo Manuel Sanchez, killing him. A female passenger was shot in the leg but survived. Three other passengers in the Equinox, including the one who arranged the drug deal, were not hit. After Sanchez was shot the car accelerated across the parking lot, over a grassy area and crashed into a ground floor apartment.

Hemphill and Arnold took off in the stolen Expedition Hemphill was driving. Aurora police linked the vehicle car to the couple after they used it in a robbery about 12 hours after the murder, and Arnold left her purse behind during a struggle with the robbery victim. Hemphill was arrested January 9, 2018 while still driving the stolen vehicle.

Police obtained records from Facebook showing Arnold setting up the drug deal with one of the passengers in the Equinox. Both defendants gave full confessions to police after their arrests.

Hemphill pleaded guilty to second-degree murder February 1 as part of a plea bargain that set his sentence at 60 years in prison. Arnold also pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced to 20 years in prison on February 15.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Kristen Wiest said at the sentencing hearing that she hopes the 60-year-sentence brings the victim's family a sense that justice has been done.

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