

ESSEX COUNTY PROSECUTORS OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE



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Subject: Man Sentenced to 20 Years for Role in Essex Fells Home Invasion Murder
Date: December 19, 2012
Category: Uncategorized
Defendant(s): Reginald Anthony

Acting Essex County Prosecutor Carolyn A. Murray announced today that Reginald Anthony, 30, of East Orange was sentenced to 20 years in New Jersey state prison by the Honorable Peter J. Vazquez, J.S.C., for 2nd degree conspiracy to commit burglary in the 2010 home invasion and robbery that resulted in the death of 91-year-old Robert Nevius of Essex Fells.

Under the No Early Release Act, Anthony must serve 85 percent of his sentence, or a minimum of 17 years, before he is eligible for parole.

On April 13, 2010, Anthony, working as a substitute driver for Mr. Nevius and his wife, Janet, took the wife to New York City for an overnight stay. The next night he returned to the couple's Essex Fells home, where Mr. Nevius remained, with another defendant, Shaun Woodson, 27, of Newark. The two decided to burglarize the house.

Unable to reach her husband by phone on the morning of April 15, 2010 Mrs. Nevius called the Essex Fells Police to request a wellness check of her husband. Police found Mr. Nevius murdered in the home. He had been strangled with his suspenders, beaten with a blunt object, slashed and stabbed in the neck with a kitchen knife.

On November 14, 2012, a jury found Anthony guilty of second degree conspiracy to commit burglary, but acquitted him of the murder charge he faced. Woodson, also indicted for murder, will face a separate jury.

"There is a need to protect the public from this defendant," Judge Vasquez said during Anthony's sentencing, noting his extensive juvenile and adult criminal record.

Anthony had been arrested seven times as a juvenile and adjudicated a delinquent on four occasions for carjacking, robbery and other crimes. His most recent charge in the Nevius case is his fourth adult conviction.

Assistant Prosecutor William Neafsey, who tried the case with Assistant Prosecutor Justin Edwab, argued for an extended sentence because of Anthony's extensive record. Ordinarily a conviction for second degree conspiracy to commit burglary would carry a 5 to 10 year sentence.

Neafsey successfully argued for the judge to impose the maximum sentence of 20 years based on

Anthony's lengthy criminal history. Anthony had previously been convicted of aggravated assault against a law enforcement officer, resisting arrest, eluding and receiving stolen property and attempted theft.

At sentencing the family's pastor and Mr. Nevius' brother-in-law spoke. The judge referenced the numerous letters he received from neighbors and community members attesting to the distinguished character of Mr. Nevius, a World War II veteran.

"The extended term was very appropriate," said Assistant Prosecutor Neafsey. "This victim was a husband, father and a decorated war veteran who had a right to live and die in his own time. While the jury did not convict Anthony of murder, but for Anthony's involvement, Mr. Nevius would still be alive today. He put in motion the events that resulted in Mr. Nevius' death."

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