

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Who Shot Dead Victim At St. Thomas Gas Station And Fled To Tortola Sentenced To 25 Years In Prison

Crime / **Published On December 13, 2017 10:16 PM /**

Staff **December 13, 2017**



ST. THOMAS -- Twenty-five years in prison – with credit for time already served – was the sentence V.I. Superior Court Judge Kathleen Mackay handed down today on Tahira Charles, V.I. Department of Justice Public Media Officer Corliss Smithen announced Wednesday.

Charles, 33, of Estate Bovoni was [punished for the June 25, 2016, shooting death of Caseam Daniel, 22, in the area of First Stop Gas station.](#) Charles was arrested on charges of first-degree murder, unauthorized use of a firearm during the commission of a first-degree murder, first-degree assault, unauthorized use of a firearm during the commission of a first-degree assault, third-degree assault and unauthorized use of a

firearm during the commission of a third-degree assault in relation to the fatal shooting. He later accepted a plea deal and pleaded guilty to second-degree murder.

"I didn't really mean to kill him," Charles said at his sentencing when given the opportunity to address the court on his own behalf. "I feel sorry for what happened... I tried to de-escalate the matter... I hope the family of Caseam Daniel can forgive me one day."

Prosecutors had recommended that Charles serve 25 years behind bars. In recapitulating the events of that fateful night, Assistant Attorney General Eugene James Connor, Jr. told the court during his allocution that the killing was captured on video and that shortly after the incident, Charles absconded to the British Virgin Islands. He was apprehended on Tortola after being shot and taken to the island's hospital for treatment. A police officer recognized Charles from a poster alerting the public that he was wanted in St. Thomas for questioning in connection with Daniel's death. He was subsequently brought back to St. Thomas to face charges.

Attorney General Claude Earl Walker said the Department of Justice is pleased with the court's judgment.

"The sentence will ensure the safety of the community and brings a sense of justice to the victim's family," AG Walker said. "This case also serves as a good example of the benefits of having a cooperative law enforcement relationship between territories that are in proximity to each other, in that officers from the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force were instrumental in apprehending the defendant."

At sentencing, the court heard from the victim's father, Carl Daniel.

"This crime has impacted my family's life so hard that words can't explain the hurt we're going through. My son was my rock, my anchor. I feel like I am in limbo without him," he said, while asking the court to impose the death penalty. Revona Smiley, the victim's mother, echoed similar sentiments.

"My son did everything for me. My son took care of me... This has hurt my family so much," she said.

According to an affidavit prepared by Det. Nigel James in support of Charles' arrest, officers responded to reports of a shooting in the area of the gas station where they found Daniel's bullet-riddled body.

Footage from a surveillance camera showed a black BMW convertible bearing tag number TEF 376 arrive at the gas station with three occupants. The driver, Devon Grant, exited the vehicle and went into the gas station's convenience store. Charles, the front seat passenger, also came out of the vehicle; the third occupant stayed inside the vehicle, James wrote.

Charles walked across the street to the area of Oswald Harris Court, where there was a group of individuals, including Daniel. Charles appeared to get into an argument with Daniel, took a gun from his pants, shot Daniel three times and then fled the area, according to James' affidavit. Based on the accounts of several witnesses and information from a confidential source, police determined that there was probable cause to arrest Charles for Daniel's murder, James wrote in his affidavit.

