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Russell Courtier and Colleen Hunt sentenced to prison for the racially motivated killing of Larnell Bruce Jr.

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that 40-year-old Russell Courtier received a life sentence and 37-year-old Colleen Hunt received a 10 year prison sentence for the racially motivated killing of 19-year-old Larnell Bruce Jr.

Under Oregon law, the mandatory sentence for someone convicted of murder is life in prison. The individual convicted shall be confined for a minimum of 25 years without the possibility of parole.

In this case, Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Jerry B. Hodson made legal findings and ruled that Courtier shall be confined for 32 years without the possibility of parole. Should Courtier apply for parole, the Oregon Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision shall determine whether or not to grant release.

On March 19, 2019, a jury found Courtier guilty of murder, felony hit and run, and intimidation in the second degree.

Intimidation in the second degree is Oregon's hate crime statute, along with intimidation in the first degree.

On March 13, 2019, Hunt pleaded guilty to one count of manslaughter in the first degree and admitted that she aided and abetted Courtier in causing the death of Mr. Bruce.

In her guilty plea she admitted that the day Mr. Bruce died, she was in a relationship with Courtier. During that time, she knew Courtier was an active member of a prison gang. Furthermore, by pleading guilty, she admitted that on August 10, 2016, she saw Courtier get into a fight with Mr. Bruce. She also admitted that she allowed Courtier to use her Jeep to chase down Mr. Bruce in Courtier's attempt to kill Mr. Bruce.

During Courtier's trial, the jury heard uncontested evidence that Courtier was a member of a white supremacist prison gang called the "European Kindred."

"Russell Courtier's membership with the 'European Kindred' gang was not out of necessity," said Multnomah County Senior Deputy District Attorney Dave Hannon, who prosecuted this case. "Instead, it stemmed from his racist desire to be a part of a 'brotherhood.' This is an appropriate sentence given that the jury found Russell Courtier's actions of murdering Larnell Bruce were motivated by his perception of Mr. Bruce's race or the color of his skin."

On August 10, 2016, Gresham Police officers and detectives responded to the intersection of Southeast 188th Avenue and Southeast Burnside Street in Gresham, Oregon to investigate a vehicular hit and run crash involving a pedestrian.

Law enforcement arrived and located Mr. Bruce suffering from critical injuries. He was transported to the hospital where he later died. During trial, the state presented evidence that showed Courtier and Mr. Bruce got into a physical altercation outside a convenience store.

Mr. Bruce attempted to leave the area when Courtier got into Hunt's Jeep. Surveillance video showed Courtier driving the Jeep towards Mr. Bruce. The video showed Mr. Bruce taking evasive maneuvers on foot in an attempt to escape Courtier and the red Jeep, Hannon told the jury.

Witnesses who testified told the jury that Courtier's actions to run down Mr. Bruce seemed "intentional."

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office recognizes the Gresham Police Department and in particular Detective Aaron Turnage for their dedicated efforts working this case.

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