

Office of the Kane County State's Attorney



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23-YEAR-OLD AURORA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FIRST-DEGREE MURDER IN NOVEMBER 2015 SHOOTING 19-YEAR-OLD SHOT TO DEATH OVER SMALL AMOUNT OF MARIJUANA

March 15, 2018

An Aurora man faces a possible sentence of life in prison after pleading guilty to shooting and killing someone over a small amount of marijuana.

23-year-old **Leon D. Williams** today pleaded guilty to first-degree murder in the Nov. 7, 2015, murder of 19-year-old Daniel Sanchez of Aurora. In addition, Williams admitted that he personally fired the gun that killed Daniel Sanchez.

Kane County Circuit Judge Donald M. Tegeler, Jr., accepted the plea and set Williams' sentencing hearing for 1:30 p.m. May 24, 2018, in Courtroom 311 at the Kane County Judicial Center. Williams faces a sentence of between 45 years and life imprisonment in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The murder sentence will include a mandatory enhancement of between 25 years and natural life because Williams' personally fired the gun and killed Daniel Sanchez.

Kane County Assistant State's Attorney William Engerman stated in court that on November 7, 2015, Daniel Sanchez agreed to sell a small amount of marijuana to Williams and the co-defendant. The three met at about noon at an agreed-upon location. Sanchez got into the back seat of a car driven by the co-defendant. Williams also was in the back seat. They drove a short distance to the 600 block of Elmwood Drive to complete the drug deal. While in the car, Williams attempted to rob Daniel Sanchez of his money and the marijuana. Daniel Sanchez got out of the car and tried to run away. Williams chased him and fired two shots from a .25 caliber handgun, striking Daniel Sanchez in the leg and head. Williams returned to the car and he and the co-defendant immediately fled. Police arrived a short time later and found Daniel Sanchez lying on the ground bleeding. He was pronounced dead at Good Samaritan Hospital. The investigation led police to Williams and the co-defendant. While being interviewed by police, Williams admitted that he tried to rob Sanchez and shot him twice.

Williams remains in the Kane County jail, where he has been held since his arrest in lieu of \$300,000 bail. Judge Tegeler revoked Williams' bond after accepting his guilty plea.

"As this type of crime demonstrates, drugs pose a serious threat to the community's safety. Leon Williams killed Daniel Sanchez over a small amount of marijuana. Violent crimes deserve severe punishment, and although this conviction will spare Daniel Sanchez's family of a trial, the pain they will live with because of the loss of their young family member will never go away," Kane County State's Attorney Joe McMahon said.

"Guns and drugs never mix, and unfortunately this outcome is one we have seen way too often. These are two young men who both lost their lives as a result of the violence associated with the drug trade," McMahon said.

The charges against the co-defendant are not proof of guilt. The co-defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial in which it is the state's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Leon D. Williams: Age 23 (d.o.b. 9-19-1994), of the 2400 block of North Farnsworth Avenue, Aurora