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NEWS RELEASE
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Lexington Park Man Convicted of First-Degree Murder

LEONARDTOWN, MD (March 2, 2026) – State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today that Zahlir Daylin Gantt, 23, of Lexington Park, Maryland was convicted of first-degree murder for his role in the fatal shooting of a 23-year-old victim that occurred on February 26, 2024.

After a four-day bench trial in the St. Mary's County Circuit Court, Gantt was convicted of the following offenses:

- First-degree murder (maximum penalty of **LIFE** in prison);
- Second-degree murder (maximum penalty of 40 years in prison);
- Conspiracy to commit first-degree murder (maximum penalty of **LIFE** in prison);
- Use of firearm in the commission of a crime of violence (maximum penalty of 20 years in prison); and
- Regulated firearm illegal possession by a disqualified person (maximum penalty of 5 years in prison).

“This verdict delivers accountability and shows that prosecutors and investigators will continue to stand together in seeking justice for victims and their families. I would like to thank the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office's crime analysts and technicians, who worked tirelessly to accumulate and analyze the voluminous amount of evidence in this case,” said State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling. “Our community deserves safety. Our office's commitment to prosecuting violent crime remains steadfast, especially when it results in the precious loss of life.”

Gantt will continue to be held without bond pending a sentencing hearing where he faces a maximum penalty of **LIFE** plus 65 years in prison.

Senior Assistant State's Attorney Alena Mosier prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

Detective Warren Forinash of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office was the lead investigator.

The Honorable Joseph Stanalonis presided over the case.

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