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NEWS RELEASE

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St. Mary's County Man Sentenced to *LIFE* Plus 30 Years in Prison for Lexington Park Murder

LEONARDTOWN, MD (July 21, 2026) – State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today that Zahir Daylin Gantt, 23, of Lexington Park, Maryland, was sentenced to *LIFE* plus 30 years in prison for the murder of a 23-year-old victim.

On February 26, 2024, deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to reports of gunfire near Fox Ridge Road and Valley Drive in Lexington Park. The victim was located inside a vehicle suffering from a gunshot wound to the head and later succumbed to his injuries.

Following a four-day bench trial in February 2026, Gantt was convicted of first-degree murder, second-degree murder, conspiracy to commit first-degree murder, use of a firearm in the commission of a violent crime, and illegal possession of a regulated firearm by a disqualified person.

The Court sentenced Gantt to *LIFE* plus *LIFE* plus 25 years in prison, with *LIFE* plus 30 years of active incarceration.

"Those who choose to commit calculated and deliberate acts of violence will be held fully accountable for the devastating consequences of their actions," said State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling. "These crimes leave lasting scars on victims' families and our community, and this sentence reflects the gravity of that irreversible harm."

Deputy 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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