



# Orange County News

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For Immediate Release  
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## **District Attorney Hoovler Announces Guilty Pleas in Robbery Cases**

*District Attorney's Office Recommending 15 years in State Prison for Defendants Who Engaged in a String of Gunpoint Robberies in Middletown and Wallkill*

Orange County District Attorney David M. Hoovler announced today that on Tuesday, July 11, 2017, three defendants pleaded guilty to a string of robberies which occurred in the City of Middletown, and the Town of Wallkill, between August 2016 and February 2017. Tajh Ali-Williams, 17, Kedney Celestin, 18, and Flancy Longuefosse, 17, all of Middletown, each pleaded guilty before Orange County Court Judge Nicholas De Rosa to multiple counts of Robbery in the First Degree, and Robbery in the Second Degree, as well as to one count of Burglary in the Third Degree. At the time that the defendants pled guilty, the Orange County District Attorney's Office stated that it will be recommending that Ali-Williams and Celestin each be sentenced to fifteen years in state prison, and five years post-release supervision, and that Longuefosse, who was charged with fewer robberies, be sentenced to eight years in state prison, and five years post-release supervision.

Ali-Williams pleaded guilty to seven counts each of Robbery in the First Degree and Robbery in the Second Degree, as well as to Burglary in the Third Degree. At the time he pleaded guilty, Ali-Williams admitted that he, and others aiding him, displayed what appeared to be firearms when they committed robberies at: a Popeye's restaurant in the Town of Wallkill, on August 31, 2016; a Dunkin Donuts store in the Town of Wallkill, on September 11, 2016; a Citgo gas station in the City of Middletown, on November 6, 2016; a Sunoco gas station in the City of Middletown, on November 22, 2016; a Valero gas station in the City of Middletown, on February 7, 2017; a Domino's restaurant in the Town of Wallkill, on February 16, 2017; and the Sam's Mart in the City of Middletown, on February 16, 2017. Ali-Williams, Celestin, and Longuefosse each admitted to forcibly breaking into a Nathan's restaurant in the Town of Wallkill on October 31, 2016.

Celestin pled guilty to six counts each of Robbery in First Degree and Robbery in the Second Degree, as well as to Burglary in the Third Degree, and admitted taking part with Williams in the

robberies which occurred on August 31, 2016, September 11, 2016, November 22, 2016, February 9, 2017, and the two robberies which occurred on February 16, 2017.

Longuefosse pleaded guilty to three counts each of Robbery in the First Degree and Robbery in the Second Degree, as well as to Burglary in the Third Degree, and admitted taking part with Williams, and sometimes Celestin, in the robberies which occurred on August 31, 2016, September 11, 2016, and November 6, 2016.

District Attorney Hoovler commended the City of Middletown Police Department for their investigation and arrests in the case, as well as the New York State Police and the Town of Wallkill Police Department who aided in the investigation.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Jason Rosenwasser.

All the defendants are scheduled to be sentenced on August 30, 2017. The judge stated that notwithstanding the recommendation of the District Attorney's Office, he will sentence Ali-Williams and Celestin to no more than seven years in state prison and five years post-release supervision, and Longuefosse to no more than five years in state prison and five years post-release supervision.

"Being the victim of a gunpoint robbery is a harrowing and often life-altering experience," said District Attorney Hoovler. "Those who commit these types of robberies not only terrorize the victims who are present, but all in the community who no longer feel safe where they live, work and shop. This type of armed, violent, street crime deserves a severe state prison sentence, particularly when the crime is repeated on multiple occasions. My office will continue to seek lengthy state prison sentences anytime someone displays what appears to be gun during a robbery."

A criminal charge is merely an allegation that a defendant has committed a violation of the criminal law, and it is not evidence of guilt. All defendants are presumed innocent and entitled to a fair trial, during which it will be the State's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.



Ali-Williams

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Celestin



Longuefosse

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