NEWS RELEASE

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Columbia Woman Convicted in 2024 Shooting of Two Teenagers Outside Grocery Store

Ellicott City, MD — Wyketa Burgess, age 40, of Columbia, Maryland, has been convicted by a Howard County jury for her role in the October 12, 2024, shooting of two teenagers outside a retail grocery store in Columbia.

Burgess was convicted of two counts of attempted second-degree murder, two counts of first-degree assault, two counts of conspiracy to commit first-degree assault, two counts of use of a firearm in the commission of a crime of violence, and two counts of conspiracy to use a firearm in the commission of a crime of violence.

According to evidence presented at trial, the shooting followed the reported armed robbery of an individual related to Burgess' co-defendant, Dieneba Traore. On October 8, 2024, Traore reported the robbery to Howard County police and provided potential leads regarding the individuals involved. The report was forwarded within the department and assigned to a detective in the robbery unit.

On October 12, 2024, four days after Traore's initial report to police, Traore and Burgess conspired with a gunman to target the individuals involved in the earlier incident. The gunman waited outside a grocery store in the 8800 block of Centre Park Drive and fired multiple rounds toward the victims as they attempted to flee. Both teenagers were struck by gunfire and transported to the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center for treatment of their injuries.

The investigation determined that one of the victims had been involved in the earlier robbery reported by Traore. The second victim was not involved in that incident.

Following a separate investigation, three juveniles connected to the robbery of Traore's son were charged and later convicted in adult court of armed robbery.

Traore was previously convicted by a jury in July 2025 of attempted second-degree murder and related charges for her role in the shooting. She was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

Burgess is scheduled to be sentenced on June 10, 2026.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant State's Attorneys Tiffany Vaira and Tricia Cecil of the Howard County State's Attorney's Office.

The investigation into the identity of the shooter remains ongoing. Anyone with information is encouraged to contact the Howard County Police Department.

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