

# Two New Bedford men convicted of 2013 murder

Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced that two men were convicted of second degree murder this morning in Fall River Superior Court. Hailton DaCosta, 27, and Antonio L. Rodrigues, 30, both of New Bedford, were convicted by a jury of their peers after week-long trial.

The two men stood accused of shooting and killing 31-year-old Sharone Stafford during a botched robbery attempt on November 23, 2013 in New Bedford. In addition to the murder charge, both men were also convicted of carrying an illegal firearm.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Dennis Collins, the Chief of DA Quinn's Homicide Unit, and Assistant District Attorney Dan Walsh.

Superior Court Judge Rene P. Dupuis, who presided over the trial, sentenced Mr. DaCosta to serve 20 years to life in state prison for the murder conviction, and an additional four to five years in state prison for the illegal firearm conviction. In total, Mr. DaCosta will serve a 24 years to life state prison sentence.

Judge Dupuis sentenced Mr. Rodrigues to serve 15 years to life in prisoner the murder conviction, and an additional three years to three years and a day in state prison for the illegal firearm conviction. In total, Mr. Rodrigues will serve an 18 years to life state prison sentence.

The trial began on November 13th and continued until November 23rd when the jury began its deliberations.

"I am elated by today's jury verdict. The jury obviously gave careful consideration to the evidence and I am grateful for that. While I am hopeful that today's conviction has brought

some closure to the family of Mr. Stafford, I am positive that these convictions will make New Bedford a safer place to live and work. Mr. DaCosta and Mr. Rodrigues are violent drug dealers. The two defendants are well-known high impact players in New Bedford, and having them off the streets for a very long time is a win for the New Bedford Police Department and the entire community,” said District Attorney Quinn. “I want to thank Assistant District Attorneys Dennis Collins and Dan Walsh; the New Bedford Police and the Massachusetts State Police, and the entire prosecution team for their tireless work in this case.”