



**Warren County Jury Finds Franklin Man  
Guilty of Murder in  
Dayton Teen's Death**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 1, 2014**

**DAVID P. FORNSHELL  
(513) 695-1325**

This morning, Michael Watson, 39, of Franklin was found guilty by a Warren County Jury of Murder, Aggravated Robbery, Kidnapping, and Tampering with Evidence in relation to the December 1, 2013 death of 16-year-old Dione Payne of Dayton. Watson was immediately sentenced to Life in prison with the possibility of parole after 15 years on the Murder conviction and an additional 8 years in prison on the other convictions for a total prison sentence of 23 years to Life.

Watson was found guilty of beating Payne to death in the early morning hours of December 1, 2013. Watson and his co-defendant, Michael Geldrich, entered the residence where Payne was staying, tied him up, and severely beat him in an attempt to steal money and drugs. After the beating, Geldrich and Watson drove an unresponsive Payne to Atrium Medical Center. Payne was later care-flighted to Miami Valley Hospital where he died from his injuries.

Watson is the last of three co-defendants to be found guilty for his role in the death of Payne. On May 8, 2014, Michael Geldrich pled guilty to Aggravated Murder, Aggravated Robbery, Kidnapping, and Tampering with Evidence for his role in Payne's death. His sentencing will be scheduled for a later date. On June 23, 2014, Adam Patrick pled guilty to Aggravated Robbery and was sentenced to the maximum of 11 years in prison for his role in the robbery and death of Payne.

The family of Dione Payne issued the following statement through the Warren County Prosecutor's Office:

"We are grateful to the Franklin Police Department and the Warren County Prosecutor's Office for their work on this case, and we are very satisfied with today's verdict and sentence."

Warren County Prosecutor David P. Fornshell commended the work of Franklin Police Department Detectives Jeff Stewart and Steve Dunham, Middletown Police Department Detectives Ken Rogers and Tim Meehan, and Assistant Prosecutors Derek Faulkner and Teresa Hiatt, who prosecuted the case.



Warren County Prosecutor  
David P. Fornshell  
(513) 695-1325

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