



# OFFICE OF THE STATE ATTORNEY THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

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## PRESS RELEASE

State Attorney John Durrett announces that Christopher Jones was found guilty by a jury of Felony Murder in the First Degree and three counts of Sale or Delivery of a Controlled Substance late Tuesday evening. Jones, a seven-time convicted felon with prior convictions for Robbery, Burglary, and Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon was sentenced to life in prison by the Honorable Melissa Olin following the trial.

Jones was found guilty of having distributed drugs, specifically fentanyl, that resulted in the death of Ms. Haeley Drake. Two other co-defendants, who previously pled guilty to Manslaughter for their role in the criminal episode, testified during the trial to Jones's involvement. Investigators with the Columbia County Sheriff's Office found fentanyl in Drake's room branded with the label, "hot sauce." Investigators were able to use a confidential informant to purchase fentanyl branded with the same label from Jones just days after the death of Drake. A chemist with the federal Drug Enforcement Administration was able to confirm the drugs found in Drake's room and the drugs purchased from Jones were a match. The case was also highlighted by cell phone records that showed communication between Jones and his two codefendants during the time frame of the original drug sale that led to Drake's death and the subsequent undercover buys conducted by law enforcement. Lead detective Richard Conger was instrumental in the investigation.

The case was prosecuted by First Assistant State Attorney Garrett Hill and Assistant State Attorney Sean Crisafulli.