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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Trial of Jeffrey Yao

On February 24, 2018, Jeffrey Yao entered the Winchester Public Library at 9:58 am. He was 23-years old, and carried a knife in his pocket. Twenty-two minutes later, he approached a 22-years old woman, Deanne Stryker, who was a medical student studying at a table. He began to repeatedly stab her in the back and neck area. She freed herself and began to run across the room with Jeffrey in pursuit. His knife was lodged in her back, and she collapsed on the floor. Jeffrey was cornered by library patrons, and he went to his knees with his hands raised above his head. Ms. Stryker was rushed to the hospital, where she was pronounced dead a little more than an hour later. Jeffrey was charged with first degree murder.

Jeffrey Yao is scheduled for a trial on March 31, 2021 at 10:00 am in courtroom 640 of the Middlesex Superior Court, located at 200 Trade Center, Woburn. He will waive his right to a trial by jury, and proceed before Justice Kathe Tuttman. The prosecution and the defense have reached an agreement on the evidence that will be presented at the trial. That stipulation is appended to this press release. It notes that three experts evaluated Jeffrey, two on behalf of the defense and one at the request of the prosecution. All three experts concluded that Jeffrey was a paranoid schizophrenic, and that he lacked the ability to appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct or to conform his conduct to the requirements of the law.

It is anticipated that at the end of the trial, which is expected to last approximately two hours, the judge will find Jeffrey not guilty of the charges against him based on his lack of criminal responsibility due to his severe mental illness at the time of the incident. It is also expected that following this verdict, Jeffrey will be committed to the Bridgewater State Hospital, which is a maximum security facility. He will remain at this Hospital potentially for the rest of his life, unless he is found to be rid of this mental illness and he no longer presents a danger to anyone in the community.

COMMONWEALTH

V.

JEFFREY YAO

STIPULATION OF FACTS FOR JURY WAIVED TRIAL

Following a colloquy with the Court and after a knowing and voluntary waiver of a jury trial by the Defendant, the parties hereby stipulate to the following facts in the above-captioned matter:

- 1.) On Saturday, February 24, 2018, then 23 year-old Defendant, Jeffrey Yao of Winchester, left his home and walked to the Winchester Public Library located at 80 Washington Street in Winchester, MA after concealing a knife in his pants. Yao entered the library at 9:58 am.
- 2.) At the time, the Victim, Deanne Stryker, 22 years-old of Winchester, who was a medical student, was studying at a table in the library resource room. Stryker was home for the weekend visiting her family and had entered the library 12 minutes prior to the Defendant.
- 3.) After entering the library, the Defendant was observed by other patrons, and on library surveillance video, to be pacing back and forth inside the resource room.
- 4.) At approximately 10:20 am, the Defendant came up behind Stryker and took out the knife. The Defendant then began to repeatedly stab Stryker in the back and neck area while also holding onto her hair.
- 5.) Lester Taber, then 77 years old of Winchester, another patron at the library, yelled at the Defendant to stop and moved toward them to intervene. The Defendant "stopped for a second" and turned his attention to Taber. The Defendant then stabbed/sliced Taber. Taber took a step back and the Defendant turned his attention back to Stryker.

- 6.) Stryker managed to free herself and run across the room. The Defendant followed her. The knife was lodged in Stryker's back at the time and she collapsed on the floor.
- 7.) Library patrons used chairs to corner the Defendant, who put his hands up and got down on his knees, while other patrons went to help Stryker.
- 8.) Police and EMS responded within minutes after receiving multiple calls to 911 by library staff and others. The Defendant was taken into custody. Stryker was transported to the Winchester Hospital where she was pronounced dead at 11:45 am. Taber was taken to the Lahey Hospital in Burlington. There, doctors noted an 8 cm stab wound with exposed muscle on Taber's left bi-cep. Trauma surgeons repaired the wound.
- 9.) Stryker's body was taken to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner where an autopsy took place on February 25, 2018. Dr. Kimberley Springer determined the cause of death to be "sharp wounds of head, neck, torso, and upper extremities. Stryker had approximately 20 stab wounds to her body including- 12 stab wounds to the head and neck, 2 stab wounds to the torso, and 6 stab wounds to the upper extremities.
- 10.) During and after the stabbing, the Defendant was heard talking about hearing "voices." The Defendant was previously diagnosed with Schizophrenia with paranoid delusions and auditory hallucinations.
- 11.) Subsequent investigation revealed that in the weeks before the stabbing, the Defendant took a martial arts class focused on knife fighting; purchased a knife three days before the stabbing; and that on the morning of the stabbing, the Defendant was searching the internet on his computer for "how to slash someone's neck" among other items.
- 12.) The parties further stipulate that the following three expert witnesses would be called on the issue of the defendant's criminal responsibility:
 - a. Dr. Robert Mendoza & Dr. Judith Edersheim for the Defendant and Dr. Alison Fife for the Commonwealth.
 - b. All three doctors would testify concerning their credentials as set forth in their Curricula Vitae attached hereto as Exhibits A and B and C, respectively.



- c. All three doctors would testify consistent with their criminal responsibility reports attached hereto as Exhibits D and E and F, respectively, all of which opine that at the time of the crime as a result of mental disease or defect, specifically Schizophrenia, the defendant lacked the substantial capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct or to conform his conduct to the requirements of the law.
- d. The expert evaluations were based upon over 3,000 pages of records including the records of the Defendant's substantial psychiatric history, investigative materials, and interviews that were conducted on March 1, 2018 (recorded interview by Alison Donovan); March 15, 2018 (Dr. Edersheim); March 20, 2018 (Dr. Mendoza); March 23, 2018 (Dr. Mendoza); March 27, 2018 (Mendoza); November 18, 2018 (Mendoza); December 20, 2018 (Dr. Mendoza); January 31, 2019 (Dr. Edersheim); and October 15, 2019 (Dr. Fife).
- e. In summary, the expert evaluations indicate that the Defendant's mental health difficulties began in high school and that he was first diagnosed with a psychotic disorder – clarified to be paranoid schizophrenia – in 2013. The Defendant was hospitalized eight times in six years in the years leading up to the incident at the library. The Defendant suffered from a history of persecutory delusions, auditory and visual hallucinations, and psychosis. Over the years, he repeatedly reported hearing voices calling him a rapist or a sex offender that were punishing him by giving him nasal congestion, diabetes, and cancer. He also repeatedly expressed suicidal thoughts, both to treatment providers and others. The Winchester police responded and transported the Defendant to the hospital for evaluation and treatment at least five times over that same period of time.
- f. The expert evaluations further indicate that at the time of these events, the Defendant was suffering from acute symptoms of schizophrenia and was "grossly psychotic" with paranoid delusions and auditory hallucinations. All three expert reports based their opinions on their understanding that the Defendant attacked Ms. Stryker because he believed that one of the voices

that was threatening him was hers and that the Defendant feared for his life from the voices and was fighting back against the voices at the time of the incident.

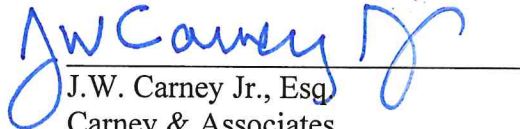
- g. Dr. Fife further specifically explains in her report that the Defendant did plan a violent attack, but that the plan was to attack the voices that were tormenting him.

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Jeffrey Yao
Defendant

Date: 3/31/21