

OFFICE OF THE MONROE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

The Honorable Brian P. Green, District Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Calli Marianetti, Community Relations Director
Monroe County District Attorney's Office
47 S. Fitzhugh Street
Rochester, NY 14614
Phone: (585) 753-4532
Email: callimarianetti@monroecounty.gov

Jury Finds Rahjule Keeton Guilty of Murder in the 2nd Degree for the Homicide of James Hallenbeck

Rochester, NY- On Tuesday, May 19, 2026, a Monroe County jury convicted 21-year-old Rahjule Keeton of Murder in the 2nd Degree, Robbery in the 1st Degree, and Robbery in the 2nd Degree for the murder James Hallenbeck.

On August 21, 2022, at approximately 1:45AM, Rochester Police Officers responded to Olean Street near Coretta Scott Crossing for reports of a shooting. Upon arrival, 29-year-old James Hallenbeck was found deceased with a gunshot wound and blunt force trauma after a robbery.

Rochester Police Investigators spent the following years meticulously going through hundreds of hours of footage, scouring evidence, and building a criminal case. After a thorough and exhaustive investigation, it was determined that Rahjule Keeton saw James Hallenbeck taking a late-night walk. Keeton and a co-conspirator then proceeded to rob, shoot, and kill James before fleeing in a vehicle.

Following identification of Rahjule Keeton, an indictment was unsealed charging him with James Hallenbeck's murder. He was apprehended in November 2025 by the United States Marshals Fugitive Task Force.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Michael Caranante, Deputy Chief of the Special Investigations Bureau.

“James Hallenbeck was a local musician who enjoyed taking late night walks to clear his mind,” said Assistant District Attorney Michael Caranante. “Unfortunately, Rahjule Keeton had other plans when he saw Mr. Hallenbeck on that summer night. I am deeply grateful to the investigators and technicians at the Rochester Police Department for putting in the difficult and tedious work to identify James Hallenbeck’s killer. I also must thank James’ parents for their strength and presence throughout this trial. While no verdict can undo this devastating loss, we hope today brings a measure of accountability and some small comfort to James’ family as they continue to grieve nearly four years later.”

“Today’s verdict shows how important excellent police work and dedicated law enforcement officers are for a community,” said Monroe County District Attorney Brian Green. “I commend Assistant District Attorney Michael Caranante for his diligent prosecution of this case, along with the Rochester Police Department investigators for their persistence in identifying the defendant. While nothing can undo the pain caused by James Hallenbeck’s tragic death, we hope today’s verdict provides his loved ones with a sense of justice.”

Rahjule Keeton will be sentenced on June 18, 2026, in front of New York State Supreme Court Justice Victoria Argento.

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