



NEWS RELEASE  
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January 26, 2024

Springfield man murdered innocent homeowner, sentenced to 55 years in prison

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that Paul Foster Cruz Morales, 32, of Springfield, Missouri was sentenced today in the shooting death of Chandler Sweaney

Morales was convicted by a Greene County jury in late 2023 of second-degree murder, armed criminal action and other weapons charges for Sweaney's death on February 1, 2021. Nearly three years to the day after 23-year-old Chandler Sweaney was killed, Morales was sentenced to prison. Following the victim impact statements from family members, Morales gave a more-than 15-minute statement in which he denied being the shooter. Circuit Judge Jerry Harmison sentenced Morales to 55 years in prison.

Chandler Sweaney was as an innocent victim who unknowingly rented a room to a drug dealer, Rickey Rose. Morales, along with Timothy Johnson, came to Sweaney's residence in the 2800 block of West Chestnut Expressway to rob Rose the night of February 1, 2021. Sweaney was shot while he was sitting on the couch in his living room and watching television.

At a hearing in 2023, Morales refused a plea deal with a prison term of 30 years with the possibility of parole, which would have dismissed the armed criminal action charge.

**This case was being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Joshua Harrel. It was investigated by the Springfield Police Department and Detective Brian Smith was the lead investigator assigned to the case.**

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