

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE from

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TX COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS UPHOLDS VERDICT ON FW MURDER TRIAL THAT SET NEW LEGAL PRECEDENT

(Tarrant County, TX) — Last week, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals upheld the conviction of Ryland Shane Absalon for the 1984 murder of Ginger Hayden. This case, tried in Tarrant County in 2012 after cold case detectives matched DNA from the scene to Absalon, received national attention for its consideration of testimony from witnesses who participated in substance abuse treatment with the accused.

At the time of prosecution, the court found that because Absalon's substance abuse treatment was court-mandated and not voluntary, his confessions to fellow participants that he committed this murder should be considered admissible.

Absalon, who was seventeen at the time of the murder, was a neighbor and classmate of eighteen-year-old Ginger Hayden. Angered by her lack of interest in a romantic relationship, Absalon hid in her bedroom closet until she was asleep, and then stabbed the victim fifty-seven times, leaving behind his DNA on a sock and splintered wood from the knife.

Tarrant County Assistant District Attorney, Lisa Callaghan, the prosecutor in Absalon's original trial, said this of the Court of Appeals decision, "*I was so pleased to hear of the Court's decision. Ginger's family waited a long time for justice. With this decision, the Court not only gave them justice; they made new law for the State of Texas.*"

Absalon is serving a life sentence.

END