

County/District Court

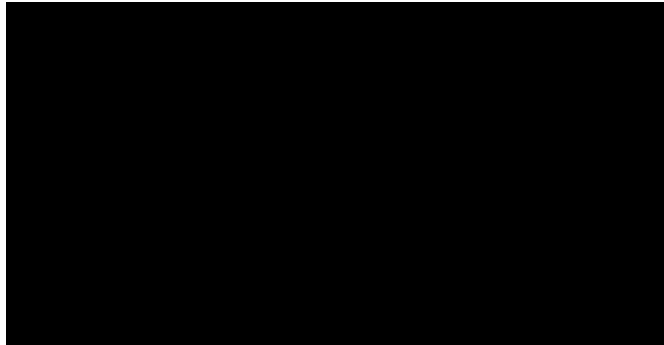
THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF COLORADO  
City and County of Denver, Colorado

Offense Case No. 2020-542494



**AFFIDAVIT AND APPLICATION FOR AN ARREST  
WARRANT FOR THE PERSON OF:**

**Gregory Alan Stapleton, Jr., DOB: 6/17/1983, a Black male, who is depicted below in a 2016 booking photo on the left, and 2020 driver's license photo on the right. He stands approximately 5'09" tall and weighs 150 pounds, with brown eyes and black hair.**



For the crimes of CRS 18-3-102(1)(a), First Degree Murder, a class 1 felony and CRS 18-4-302, class 3 felony.

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I, Detective Daniel Andrews 96015 of the Denver Police Homicide Unit, the Affiant, state under oath that the facts known to the Affiant which establish probable cause to believe that a criminal offense was committed, and that the offense was committed by the above named person, are the following:

**Tuesday, September 8, 2020**

At approximately 11:49 a.m., Auraria Higher Education Center student [REDACTED] pushed an emergency call box button to advise Auraria Campus Police Department (ACPD) of a male down near 1155 St. Francis Way, Denver, CO, 80204 . She said he was in a pool of blood and unresponsive. ACPD Officers responded, along with Denver Fire and Paramedics. The victim, who has since been identified as Richard Ford III, DOB: 04/08/1984, was found to be suffering from what appeared to be a sharp force injury to his torso. He was rushed to Denver Health Medical Center by ambulance, but unfortunately could not be saved and was pronounced deceased by Dr. Kerry Broderick at 12:22 p.m.

ACPD, who handles most, but not all investigations on the Auraria Campus, then notified the Denver Police Department (DPD) of this homicide. District 1 Corporal Kevin Dreyfuss responded along with his recruit, Officer Allen Sparks. They requested the assistance of investigators, and Your Affiant was assigned as the primary investigator, while Cold Case/Homicide Unit Detective Kari Johnson was assigned as the secondary. Detective Johnson responded to the scene, while Your Affiant remained at DPD headquarters to interview witnesses. Detective Johnson later informed Your Affiant that the scene was limited to a large puddle of blood, and clothing which had been cut from the victim before he was transported to DHMC.

## AFFIDAVIT AND APPLICATION FOR A SEALED ARREST WARRANT

Your Affiant conducted the following digitally recorded interviews at DPD HQ:

██████████ stated-

- He'd been in the lunch line at the church on the Auraria campus, when an African-American male and a white male began arguing over socks which were being handed out
- He remembered the African-American male making a statement to the white male about "throwing hands," which he interpreted as an invitation to fist fight
- Both of these two men left the lunch line, and walked out of his sight
- He later came upon the same white male down on the ground, bleeding heavily, and being attended to by ACPD officers

██████████ stated-

- He was working in a ██████████ near 1155 Saint Francis Way
- His attention was drawn to a white male, and an African-American male, both of whom appeared transient and he assumed to be associated with the nearby soup kitchen
- The white male had his hands in his coat pockets, and the men were arguing
- He saw the white male sit down and then fall over, and he at first believed he'd just passed out
- A student came by and called the police
- Once the police arrived and rolled the white male over he saw all the blood

██████████ provided the following information-

- She works on the Auraria campus and was driving into the parking lot in her vehicle
- She saw a white male fall face first to the ground, and an African-American male walk away briskly, carrying bags
- She also notified the ACPD

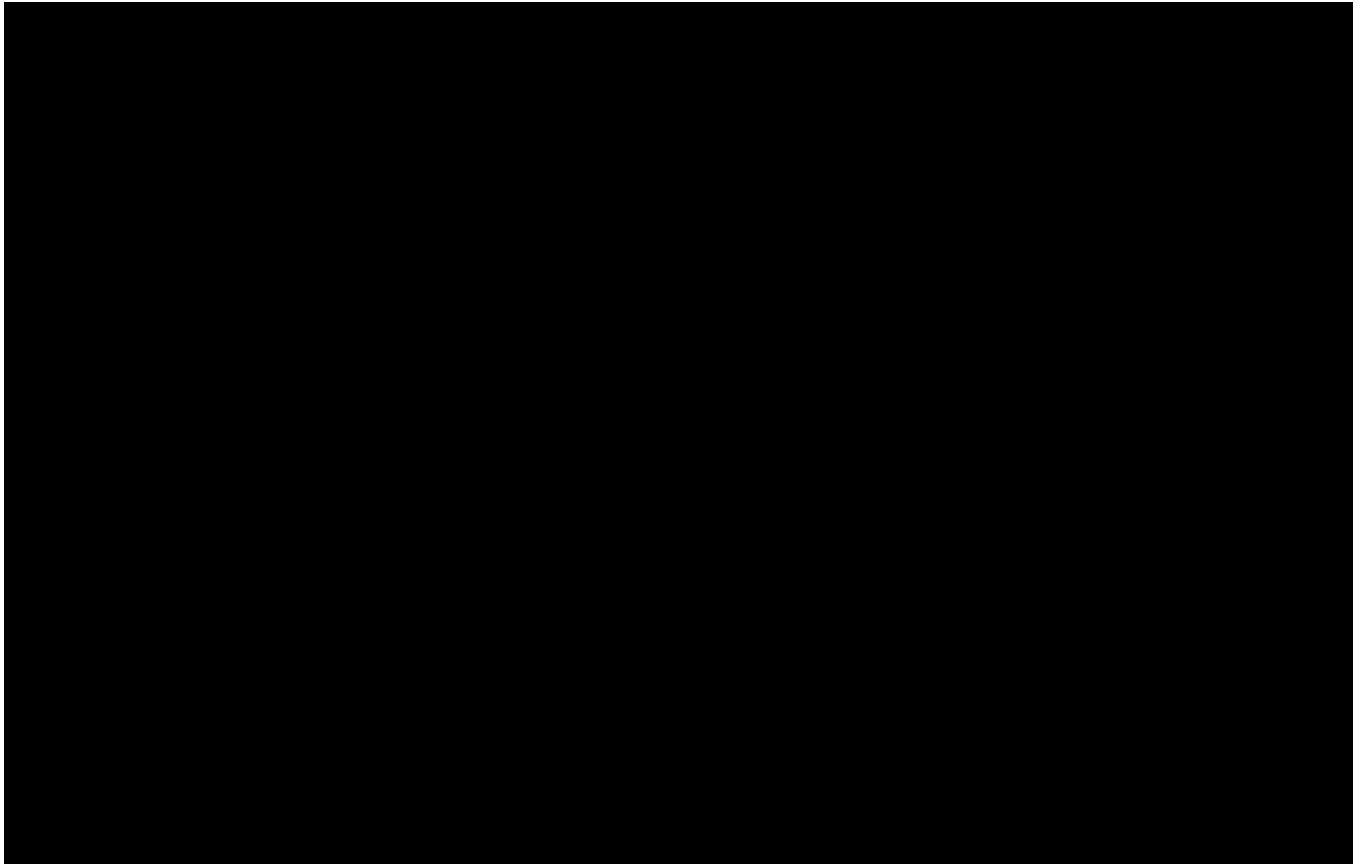
Your Affiant researched the victim and found him to be apparently experiencing homelessness in the Denver area. He has a history of petty and misdemeanor arrests, but no arrests for violent crimes or weapons offenses. Your Affiant has also spoken with the victim's family members who stated that he wasn't known to abuse drugs or alcohol, and only became homeless after suffering a head injury from an assault several years ago.

### **Wednesday, September 9, 2020**

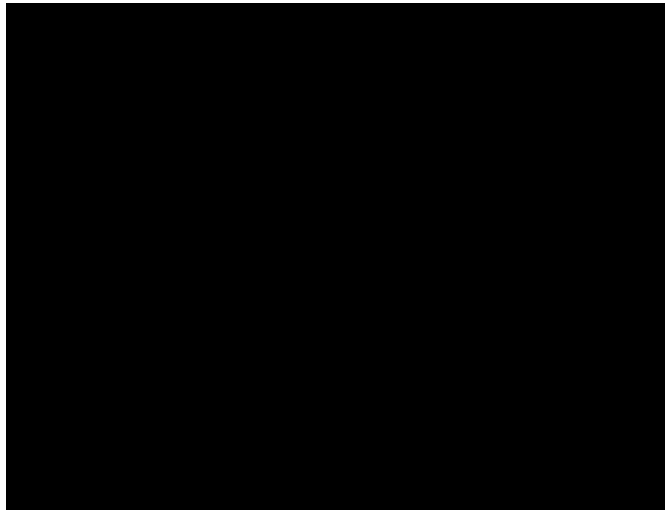
Your Affiant attended the victim's postmortem examination at the Denver Office of the Medical Examiner. The examination began at 9:00 a.m. and was conducted by Forensic Pathology Fellow Sterling McLaren, M.D. The victim was found to have suffered a single, sharp force injury to his left chest, which resulted in an incised wound to his heart. Dr. McLaren stated the manner of death is homicide.

Working in conjunction with ACPD and RTD ██████████ ██████████ and by reviewing the DPD's High Activity Location Observation (HALO) camera network himself, Your Affiant has been able to track the movements of parties involved in this incident. In summary:

**AFFIDAVIT AND APPLICATION FOR A SEALED ARREST WARRANT**

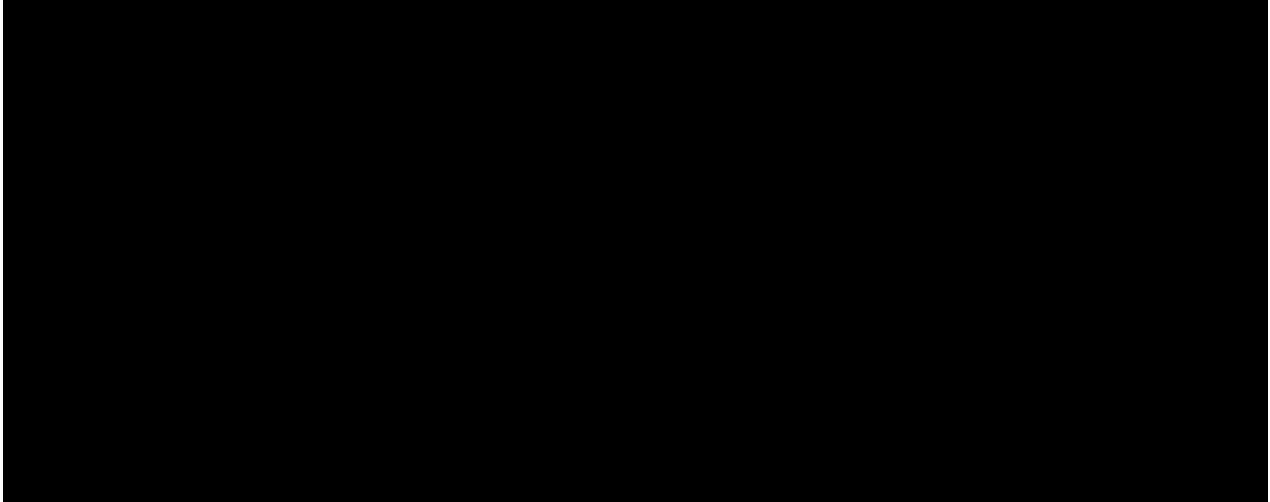


Nearly every time the suspect is captured on camera during the above events his distinguishing features are concealed by a COVID mask, glasses, a hood and a hat, or some combination thereof. For example, the below picture is a still shot of video footage as he exits the train he'd gotten onto at Auraria minutes earlier. The orange detailing on his shoes is clearly visible, as is the victim's teal colored backpack in his right hand.



**AFFIDAVIT AND APPLICATION FOR A SEALED ARREST WARRANT**

However, while on the way to the Auraria campus, at about 10:54 a.m., less than an hour prior to the homicide occurring, the suspect had no reason to conceal his identify and therefore was riding the train without a mask on, his hat, or a hood. Consequently, the below screen shots were obtained from the surveillance video clearly showing his face, and distinguishing features of his clothing, such as the orange detailing on his shoes.



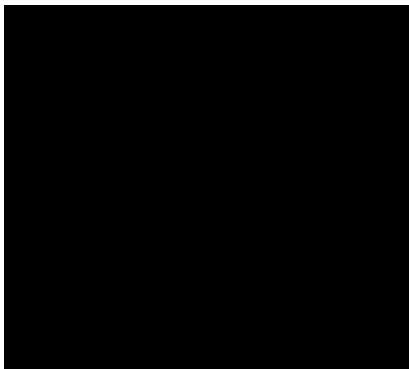
**Monday, September 14, 2020**

Your Affiant published a Crime Stoppers bulletin asking for the public’s assistance in identifying and locating the suspect, based on the surveillance photos obtained during the investigation.

**Wednesday, September 16, 2020**

Your Affiant received an anonymous tip from a party who works at the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], identifying the party in the Crime Stoppers flyer as Gregory Stapleton, DOB: 06/17/1983, which he obtained from [REDACTED]. Your Affiant searched the DPD’s records management system and only found one black male named Gregory Stapleton, who has a DOB of 6/17/1983.

Your Affiant researched this party and found that he listed 1101 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. Denver, which is Father Woody’s, as his home address when he updated his driver’s license on August 7, 2020. The driver’s license file also indicates that Stapleton wears corrective lenses. The photograph associated with that driver’s license is below:



## AFFIDAVIT AND APPLICATION FOR A SEALED ARREST WARRANT

Your Affiant noticed several similarities between this driver's license photo, which appears to have been taken only about 30 days before the murder, and surveillance footage captured immediately before and after the murder. First is the distinctive, thick and unkempt beard which follows the jawline only. Second, the lack of a mustache, as is typically worn with a beard. Third is the thick head of hair, which has both a straight hairline relatively low on the forehead, and the hairline along the temples that juts out towards the eyebrows.

Stapleton has the following criminal conviction history:

- 2012CR1804, Denver District Court, a plea of guilty to 3<sup>rd</sup> degree assault on a case that was originally charged as a felony menacing with a real/simulated weapon, and POWPO
  - 2012CR190, Arapahoe County, a plea of guilty to misdemeanor theft, and false reporting to a pawn broker
  - 2011CR934, Denver District Court, a plea of guilty to misdemeanor criminal mischief
  - 2006CR03129, Johnson County District Court, KS, a felony property crime conviction
  - 2003DV00377, Johnson County District Court, KS, a felony conviction for aggravated assault and criminal damage to property
- Additionally, he was acquitted at trial on 2010CR003689, in Denver, on a felony menacing with a deadly weapon case, which involved him attempting to stab the victim with a knife, following a verbal argument

Your Affiant's partner, Detective Johnson, visited ██████████ to follow up on the Crime Stopper's tip and spoke with ██████████. He identified himself as the tipster. He said he recognized the person in the bulletin because he, ██████████. He said he is 85-90% certain the party on the flyer is Greg Stapleton, who he's interacted with approximately 20 times since January of 2020. He stated that he has seen Stapleton recently, and that his appearance closely matches the person in the bulletin, who now looks very different from Stapleton's past booking photos, in which Stapleton has a much more "clean cut" appearance. ██████████ said he believes he last saw Stapleton on the morning of this homicide, Tuesday, September 8, 2020, between 10:30 and 11:00 a.m., ██████████. Lastly, ██████████ stated that although Stapleton used to routinely come into the shelter to shower, obtain his mail and use the computer, he has not seen him since this homicide occurred.

██████████ recollection that he saw Stapleton on the morning of the murder between 10:30-11:00 a.m. fits perfectly with the surveillance footage of Stapleton on the train, coming from the direction of the shelter, at 10:54 a.m.

In summary, ██████████ has reported that the suspect and victim were involved in a verbal argument, apparently over cutting in line for free socks. According to ██████████, the suspect challenged the victim to fight. The fatal stabbing itself, and the theft of the victim's bag, are captured on video, as is nearly all of the suspect's flight from the immediate area on foot, by train, and bus. During that time the suspect is careful to disguise his identity. However, while on the train on the way to the Auraria campus less than an hour before the homicide, his face was plainly visible. ██████████ stated he is 85-90% certain the man in the surveillance photos is Stapleton. Finally, both Stapleton's past criminal history, including an event with circumstances nearly identical to this one, and his distinctive physical appearance further identify him as the man who senselessly murdered the victim.

**AFFIDAVIT AND APPLICATION FOR A SEALED ARREST WARRANT**

Therefore, your Affiant respectfully requests Your Honor issue an arrest warrant for Gregory Stapleton for the murder of Richard Ford III.

I affirm this information to be true and correct, /s/ Detective Daniel Andrews, 96015.

Subscribed under oath before me on September 17, 2020 3:22pm  
Date Time  
Judge James Zobel  
Judge or Notary Public

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_

**ARREST WARRANT**

To all Sheriffs, Peace Officers and Police Officers with the said State:

You are hereby commanded to take the person of the defendant and bring him without unnecessary delay before a Judge of the County Court to be dealt with according to law.

Bail fixed at \$ First Appearance

J. Zobel  
Signature of Judge

Date September 17, 2020

James Zobel  
Printed name of Judge

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I executed the above warrant on (date) \_\_\_\_\_ by taking  
\_\_\_\_\_ (name of person arrested) into custody and placing said person in the  
\_\_\_\_\_ Jail for safekeeping until further order of the court.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Arresting Officer