

State of South Carolina
Solicitor, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit



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PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

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Man Gets 25 Years in Armed Robbery Spree

Thirteenth Circuit Solicitor Walt Wilkins states that twenty-year-old Brandon Cornelius Croft pled guilty on March 13, 2012, to three counts of Armed Robbery, one count of Attempted Armed Robbery, four counts of Possessing a Weapon During a Violent Crime, and three counts of Assault and Battery of a High and Aggravated Nature. The Honorable C. Victor Pyle, Jr., sentenced Croft to twenty-five years in the South Carolina Department of Corrections. Croft will have to serve eighty-five percent of his sentence before he can be released from prison.

Evidence presented at the hearing by Assistant Solicitor Allen Fretwell established that Croft and four co-defendants rode around the city of Greenville in the early morning hours of February 25, 2009, selecting victims at random, robbing them at gunpoint, and then assaulting them. Two of the victims were unidentified, but three appeared in court prepared to testify against Croft. Fretwell told the Court that Croft and co-defendant Travis Smiley were the "ring-leaders" that early morning as the five rode around in a vehicle driven by Croft. Croft and the others stole \$7.00 and a cell phone from one victim, a cell phone from another, and \$100.00 from a third victim. In each of the instances, one or more of the co-defendants pointed a handgun at the victim and demanded money. In three of the robberies, the victim was either beaten or kicked by one or more of the co-defendants. All five co-defendants were apprehended by officers with the Greenville Police Department when they stopped at the Texaco on Shaw Street in Greenville, shortly after the attacks. Upon their arrest, items belonging to the victims were located in the defendants' possession. Bandanas, two handguns, brass knuckles and a wooden club were also located throughout the vehicle.