

# ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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**Theodore F. L. Housel**

**Prosecutor**

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## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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**MAYS LANDING** – A Pleasantville man entered a guilty plea today to one count of robbery and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose in connection with a 2008 home invasion in Pleasantville. He faces eight years in prison when he is sentenced in April, Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel announced.

Laquae Anderson-Byard, 21, must serve 85 percent of the prison term before parole eligibility. On April 24, 2008 at 3 a.m., the defendant, armed with a .22-caliber rifle, along with two other males, barged into apartment 302 in the Sassafra Run Apartment complex, held victims Tanya Melton and Tasha Romero at gunpoint, ordered them to the floor and stole various items from the victims, including a cell phone and approximately \$700 in cash. Anderson-Byard and his accomplices then fled on foot. Pleasantville police responded to the residence after they received a 911 call from one of the victims. Anderson-Byard and a juvenile male were arrested later that day in Pleasantville. The juvenile's case was adjudicated in Family Court prior to today's hearing and the other male has never been identified, according to Assistant Prosecutor John Flammer.

"Miss Melton's two young children were sleeping in a nearby bedroom at the time of the robbery. This had the potential to be an even more dangerous situation because Anderson-Byard was armed," Flammer stated. "Although the defendant was only 19 at the time and had no prior adult criminal record, this plea agreement and sentence recommendation are just in light of the defendant's actions that day."

Superior Court Judge Albert Garofolo presided over the plea hearing. The defendant will be sentenced on April 30.

**Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor's Office Web site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS) or visit the Crime Stoppers Website at <http://www.crimestoppersatlantic.com/>. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.**