

# Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



Shane Colombo, 25, was shot and killed hours after he moved to the area to begin a doctoral program at Northwestern University in 2018.

## Man guilty in slaying of NU grad student

25-year-old shot to death in Rogers Park hours after moving to the area in 2018

By Caroline Kubzansky  
Chicago Tribune

Sitting on the hallway floor outside a Cook County courtroom Thursday, Vicente Colores-Chalmers held up a September 2018 video of his fiancé, Shane Colombo.

Colombo, 25, had just walked into a condo the couple had purchased in Evanston for the first time, and sent Colores-Chalmers a video of himself there, laughing and saying hello. About two hours after he sent the video to Colores-Chalmers, Colombo, an incoming doctoral student at Northwestern University, was shot to death near Clark and Howard streets in Rogers Park.

On Thursday night, a jury found Diante Speed, now 26, guilty of first-degree murder after about four hours of deliberation. Inside the courtroom at the Leighton Criminal Court Building, Colombo's mother, Tonya Colombo, gasped as the verdict was read. Speed's mother and grandmother, on the other side of the courtroom, remained quiet.

Shortly after court was dismissed, Tonya Colombo, 58, grinned. It had been an anxious six years of waiting and "wanting justice, wanting to give him peace," she said. "Now I feel we can finally do that."

Waiting for the trial was stressful for both parents. Shane Colombo's father, Ernesto, brought a tattered file of paperwork to each day of the court proceedings. The file contained everything from his son's birth and death certificates to his Social Security card and notes from conversations he's had with detectives. He has poured much of his grief into the intricacies of the legal process and Speed's criminal history, even though he knew it would not undo the events of six years ago.

"Nothing's going to bring him back," Ernesto Colombo said. "(But) we're at the part where we seek justice."

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## INSIDE Israel launches strikes on Iran, officials say

Israel launched airstrikes early Saturday on what it claimed were military targets in Iran in retaliation for a ballistic missile assault Oct. 1, officials said. The strikes happened just as U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken was arriving back in the U.S. after a tour of the Middle East, where he had warned Israel not to further escalate the conflict in the region.

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## Feds: Arrested rapper was ready to take flight to Italy

Englewood native Lil Durk allegedly planned private jet before criminal charges were filed in murder-for-hire plot

By Sam Charles and Jason Meisner  
Chicago Tribune

Chicago rapper and Englewood native Lil Durk, born Durk Banks, was scheduled to take a private jet to Italy when he was arrested Thursday in Florida in connection with an alleged murder-for-hire plot, according to a federal criminal complaint unsealed in California on Friday.

Banks, 32, was charged in the complaint with contracting five associates to murder Georgia rapper Quando Rondo, born Tyquan Terrel Bowman, in retaliation for the 2020 slaying of Chicago rapper King Von.

The complaint said Banks "put out a monetary bounty" for Bowman's slaying.

That shooting, carried out at a Los Angeles gas station in August 2022 and captured

on surveillance video, took the life of Quando Rondo's cousin, Saviay'a Robinson, according to the criminal charges.

Banks' associates were arrested in Chicago early Thursday morning and a series of search warrants were conducted. At the time, Banks was in Ft. Lauderdale, where he subsequently booked international travel on separate flights to Dubai and Switzerland — but he didn't get on either plane, according to the criminal complaint.

Turn to Rapper, Page 2

**JOHNSON MUM ON DONATION:** Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson on Friday refused to say whether he will return \$150,000 that Chicago rapper Lil Durk contributed to the mayor's political committee, a day after the artist was arrested in an alleged murder-for-hire plot. **Page 2**



Former Lincoln Park High School basketball coaches Larry Washington, left, and Pat Gordon stand outside the school Friday in Chicago. After years of litigation, CPS will likely approve settlements of more than \$1 million in total with the coaches. **STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## A costly accusation

CPS to settle Lincoln Park coaches' defamation lawsuits, but money can't replace reputation, says one staffer fired in 2020

By Sarah Macaraeg  
Chicago Tribune

After more than three years of litigation, Chicago Public Schools lawyers will ask the Board of Education to approve two settlements, totaling about \$1.3 million, with former Lincoln Park High School girls and boys varsity basketball head coaches Larry Washington and Pat Gordon.

The agreements reached Oct. 18, pending board approval, mark the latest development in a more than four-year scandal involving the North Side school of about 2,200 students. The board is expected to

approve the settlements by December, when U.S. District Judge Keri Holleb Hotaling has required the agreements to be finalized.

Along with other former Lincoln Park staffers, Washington and Gordon were abruptly fired from coaching in January 2020. Each filed lawsuits in federal court a year later, claiming that CPS had destroyed their reputations and inflicted emotional distress.

According to an independent arbitrator's 2023 ruling on a resulting labor grievance, CPS conducted a community meeting in 2020 in which a district presentation asso-

ciated multiple terminated staffers with vague accusations involving sex and retaliation.

CPS also later sent "overtly false and/or misleading" messages to the school community, the arbitrator wrote, ordering CPS to similarly issue an apology or retraction.

"They still owe me the apology," said Washington, who considers the newly-agreed upon settlement incomplete without it. "Settlements can't replace my reputation."

Lincoln Park parent Jennifer Lister attended the meeting in 2020, having a daughter on the girls basketball team at the time. Lister said she was so shocked by CPS'

Turn to Lawsuit, Page 4



Elizabeth Kendall and Peter Schoenmann stand near a portion of the "Solidarity" mural they're saving in their lab in Berwyn on Friday. **ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## One of Chicago's oldest public art pieces being saved, thanks to grant

By Peter Breen  
Chicago Tribune

Peter Schoenmann leaned over a rectangular hunk of plaster with a historic mural painted on it Friday morning in Berwyn. He began slowly shaving material off the backside of the hunk with a vibrating tool while his wife, who's also an art conservator, positioned a vacuum near the blade and sucked up the debris.

The goal is to shave away the heavy plaster, which used to be part of a wall in a Near West Side union hall, until it's about an eighth of an inch thick — so the mural can be hung in its new home.

Early in 2024, the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America union "moved heaven and earth" to rescue the mural — considered one of the oldest

public art pieces in the Chicago area — from destruction, according to Carl Rosen, the general president of the union, which is also called the United Electrical Workers union.

Now, thanks to a \$450,000 grant awarded by the Mellon Foundation this month, the public will be able to enjoy the mural once again.

"It was kind of a leap of faith by all of us in the art community, in the labor community, in the social justice community, everybody who was invested in preserving the mural to put the effort and put the funds in to get the mural off the walls — with the belief in ourselves and each other that we would find a way to get the funds (to conserve it)," he said.

The sprawling mural, which is titled

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