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# DOTHAN EAGLE

## Kinston man gets 12 years for shooting

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A judge gave a Kinston man a 12-year prison sentence Thursday for the shooting death of a 21-year-old man over the Christmas holiday in 2007.

Geneva County District Attorney Kirke Adams said Circuit Court Judge Ken Quattlebaum sentenced 20-year-old Matthew Leske to a dozen years in prison for manslaughter.



Matthew Leske

Adams said the jury found Leske guilty of using a rifle to shoot Brent Cook to death at a woman's home near Samson. Cook suffered the fatal wound during a dispute in the front yard at Tasha Saulter's home. Adams said Cook had dated the woman for about five years before he was killed.

"He went to see her that night, and Leske was there and things escalated from that point," Adams said.

A Geneva County grand jury indicted Leske on a charge of murder, but the jury found him guilty of manslaughter. Leske was taken into

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custody after the guilty verdict in June. He'd previously been released after he posted a \$150,000 bond the day after his arrest on Dec. 26, 2007.

Adams said Quattlebaum also denied a request by the defense for probation. Adams said Leske faced 10 to 20 years in prison for the class B felony of manslaughter, which was enhanced because a deadly weapon

was used during the crime.

John Knowles, the attorney who represented Leske, could not be reached for comment. An earlier *Dothan Eagle* report said Knowles contended his client killed Cook in self-defense.

"I think it's a sentence the judge thought long and hard about," Adams said. "But the most important message he had today was the law does not allow you to claim self defense and shoot an unarmed man. Our laws value human life, and (say) that it can only be taken under the most extreme circumstances."