

3 TEENS HELD IN ATTACK THAT KILLED \ GIRL AT PARTY

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Family and friends will gather today to pay their last respects to Melody Rucker, a popular Benedictine High School junior who died early Sunday in a shotgun attack on an end-of-summer party.

Three Detroit youths accused in the attack, in which another girl was wounded, are being held without bond on murder charges in Wayne County Jail.

Detroit police said Wednesday that Rucker and Vinita Smith, both 16, probably didn't know the three 17-year-olds in custody.

Damion Todd , of Murray Hill Avenue; Vernard Carter, of Mansfield Street, and Derrick McClure, of St. Marys Avenue, were arraigned Tuesday in 36th District Court on charges of first- degree murder, assault with intent to commit murder and felony use of a firearm. They were ordered held without bond.

Preliminary examinations are to be held Aug. 28.

Police said the three tried to crash a party at a house in the 17500 block of Sunderland -- which Rucker helped organize -- and were asked to leave. Police said they returned about 15 minutes after midnight as the party of about 50 Benedictine High School juniors was breaking up.

"They came back in one car and fired some shots using a shotgun," said the police officer.

Police declined to discuss the youths' backgrounds.

Rucker died of gunshot wounds to the throat, eye and shoulder. Smith was in serious condition at Mt. Carmel Mercy Hospital with a gunshot wound to the chest.

Rucker played volleyball and basketball, went out for track and was a class representative. She belonged to St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church and was a member of the diocesan youth task force and the choir.

A funeral service will be held at the church at 10:30 a.m. today.

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Rucker

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