



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Social media helps solve another robbery case in Howard County

Howard County police have charged a North Carolina man with committing an armed robbery after a tipster identified him from surveillance photos posted on social media.

Ryan Ashley Powell, 36, of Filmore Drive in Wilmington, N.C., has been charged with armed robbery, first-degree assault and theft in the March 13 robbery of a McDonald's restaurant in the 6200 block of Washington Blvd. in Elkridge.

An employee reported that around 5:30 a.m., a man approached the counter, displayed a knife and demanded money from the cash register. The employee complied and the man fled in a gray Volkswagen Passat station wagon. She told police the man was wearing a blue sweatshirt with gray sleeves and appeared to have some type of trauma or disfigurement to the right side of his face.

Detectives obtained images from the McDonald's surveillance video and observed a suspect matching the description. They released the man's photo on Facebook and Twitter and asked for the public's help to identify him. Officers received a tip that the same man had been seen at the Horseshoe casino in Baltimore. He also was seen driving the same car used in the McDonald's robbery.

Through investigation, police identified the man as Powell and obtained an arrest warrant. He was located at his home in North Carolina and brought back to Howard County to face charges. He is currently being held at the Howard County Detention Center on \$150,000 bond.

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