



U.S. Department of Justice

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## PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, August 9, 2011

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**Public Affairs**

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<http://www.justice.gov/usao/dc/news/2011/apr/news.html>

### **Seventeen Charged in Drug Conspiracy, Accused of Distributing Cocaine in Washington Area**

**- Cocaine, Firearms, Cash Seized in Searches -**

WASHINGTON – Fifteen individuals have been arrested in connection with a three-year investigation into drug trafficking in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. At the time of the arrests, law enforcement officers seized illegal narcotics, six firearms, four vehicles, and more than \$600,000 in cash. The arrests follow the return of a federal indictment charging 17 individuals with conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute cocaine, crack cocaine, and marijuana.

The arrests, indictments, and seizures were announced today by U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr., James W. McJunkin, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office, and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

The defendants were indicted on Thursday, August 4, 2011 on charges of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute cocaine, crack cocaine, and marijuana. The indictment also includes a forfeiture allegation seeking all proceeds derived from and assets used to commit the alleged crimes. If convicted, the defendants face a minimum of ten years in custody and a maximum of life in prison.

The seventeen defendants charged include Espey Brown, Jr., 37, of Washington, D.C.; Keith Gregory Gaston, 39, of Silver Spring, MD; Angela Denise Peoples, 40, of Washington, D.C.; Eugene Edward Gadson, 38, of Washington, D.C.; Derrick Anthony Harris, 37, of Washington, D.C.; Laura Ann Cooper, 51, of Washington, D.C.; Gregory Tuckson, 55, of Washington, D.C.; Harry Terrell, Jr., 68, of Washington, D.C.; Thomas Kearney, Jr., 53, of Washington, D.C.; Gregory Martin, 55, of Washington, D.C.; David Emanuel Kyle, 41, of Camp Springs, MD; Tyrone Marcel Smith, 42, of Accokeek, MD; Joseph Garvin Young, 35, of Lanham, MD; Anthony Andre Carter, 32, of Fort Washington, MD; Walter Lybrant Hayman, 47, of Glenn Dale, MD; Marcus Alfred Gurley, 31, of Glenn Dale, MD; and Eric Michael Woods, 40, of Washington, D.C.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of criminal law and is not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.

Following the return of the indictment, law enforcement officers executed a series of arrest and search warrants in the District of Columbia and Maryland during the early morning hours of August 9, 2011, confiscating approximately one-half kilogram of cocaine, one-quarter kilogram of crack cocaine, and one pound of marijuana. In addition, the officers seized four vehicles, more than \$600,000 in cash, and six firearms, including two machine pistols.

“These arrests and seizures are the result of a concerted, relentless campaign to disrupt and dismantle the networks that fuel drug addiction in our city,” said U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. “By removing these narcotics and guns from our neighborhoods, we have made the District of Columbia a safer place.”

“Today’s arrests show the hard work and determination of agents and detectives from FBI, MPD, Prince George’s County Police Department and the U.S. Marshals Service and U.S. Park Police who partner together to rid our streets of these alleged drug networks,” said Assistant Director in Charge McJunkin.

“Because of our continued focus in the Shaw community, we have seen a dramatic reduction in violent crime,” said Chief Lanier. “These arrests are an example of the efforts of law enforcement working together to make our communities safer.”

The prosecution grew out of three years of investigative activities by a long-term FBI/MPD alliance called the Safe Streets Task Force. The Safe Streets Initiative involves more than 150 Safe Streets Task Forces around the country that combat street gangs by combining federal, state and local police resources. The task forces, which began in 1992 in Los Angeles and the District of Columbia, address gang activity including drug-related crimes. Sharing resources, manpower and intelligence allows federal prosecutors to focus on securing the maximum sentences and penalties for gang members found guilty. By working through a Task Force, investigators can focus on the entire criminal enterprise, instead of the prosecution of individual gang members.

In announcing the indictments, U.S. Attorney Machen, Assistant Director McJunkin and Chief Lanier commended the work of the FBI and MPD members of the task force who investigated the case. They also thanked the U.S. Marshals Service, the U.S. Park Police, the United States Attorney’s Office for the District of Maryland, and the Prince George’s County Police Department, all of which provided assistance. Finally, they cited the efforts of those who worked on the case from the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia, including Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kenneth F. Whitted, Seth Adam Meinero, and Barry Wiegand.