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PRESS RELEASE

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Four Members of Violent Drug Ring Convicted of Conspiracy and Murder in 2008 Slaying of Person They Viewed as a Witness - More Than 30 Shots Fired at Victim -

WASHINGTON - Four members of a violent drug conspiracy were convicted by a jury today of conspiracy, first degree murder while armed with aggravating circumstances, obstruction of justice, and related firearms offenses stemming from a slaying that took place in August 2008 in Southeast Washington, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

The verdict followed a month-long trial in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. The jury convicted Javon Roberts, 33, Michael Walters, 31, Shawn Curry, 23, and Alonzo Marshall, 23, all of Washington, D.C. The Honorable Judge Thomas J. Motley, who presided at trial, scheduled sentencing for May 6, 2011. The defendants face a mandatory minimum of 30 years in prison and could be sentenced to life prison terms because they targeted and killed the victim because they viewed him as a potential witness.

The evidence at trial established that the defendants operated a drug organization for a number of years in the area of 22nd and Savannah Streets SE. The organization was set back significantly in August 2008 when members of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), after having received reliable information, executed a search warrant on the apartment from which the men operated. In the weeks that followed the raid of the apartment, members of the drug organization tried to uncover the identity of the informant who provided the tip to the police.

These efforts were headed by Roberts, the leader of the conspiracy. As a result of their investigation, the members of the drug conspiracy mistakenly concluded that the decedent, Michael Henry, 25, was the individual who had tipped off police.

Thus, on August 30, 2008, Marshall lured the decedent to the 3400 block of 22nd Street, where Walters and Curry were waiting to ambush him. Curry and Walters chased Henry through multiple courtyards in a residential area of Southeast Washington, D.C., shooting at him more

than 30 times. Henry was struck twice by the gunfire and died on the scene.

Given the brazen nature of this crime, and the fact that the defendants made the community aware that the victim was murdered because he was believed to have cooperated with law enforcement officials, witnesses were slow to come forward. However, eventually a number of individuals came forward and put their trust in the criminal justice system.

“Today’s verdict demonstrates the power of the community coming together to hold violent criminals accountable,” said U.S. Attorney Machen. “These drug dealers killed one young man because they mistakenly believed he had reported them to the police, spurring more courageous citizens to come forward and testify against them. Violent criminals are no match for law-abiding citizens who are willing to stand up for their neighborhoods.”

In announcing the verdicts, U.S. Attorney Machen and Chief Lanier praised the outstanding efforts of members of the law enforcement community in bringing about the successful prosecution. Countless members of the MPD, the FBI’s Washington Field Office, and the U.S. Park Police worked tirelessly in their coordinated efforts. They included MPD Detectives Danny Whalen, Susan Blue, and Jeffrey Mayberry, as well as Officers Christopher Smith, Alvin Lytle, Dwayne Mitchell, and Natasha Pettus, along with U.S. Park Police Detective William Sepeck and the FBI.

U.S. Attorney Machen and Chief Lanier also commended the efforts of those at the U.S. Attorney’s Office who worked on the case, including Intelligence Analyst Lawrence Grasso; Litigation Specialist Leif Hickling; M. Laverne Forrest, Debra Cannon, Shawn Slade, and Katina Adams, of the Victim Witness Assistance Unit, and Paralegal Sharon Newman.

Finally, they praised the work of Assistant U.S. Attorneys Laura Bach and Seth Waxman, who investigated the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bach and Todd Gee, who tried the case.

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