



# ***CITY NEWS***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**\*\*Media Advisory \*\***

**“Cold Case” Task Force Completes Historic Investigation**

In September 2006, Wichita Police Department Gang Detectives received information from various sources regarding the Neighborhood Crips Gang criminal operations, including involvement in homicides that occurred between 1993 and 2006, using local runaway girls as prostitutes, the distribution, manufacturing and trafficking of narcotics, and committing violent crimes throughout the City of Wichita.

As a result of the information, which was verified by interviews and investigators, the Cold Case Task Force was created in November 2006. The 16-member task force included personnel from the Wichita Police Department, the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Sedgwick County Sheriff’s Office. In addition, the task force received assistance in its investigation from the U.S. Marshall’s Service, the Kansas Attorney General’s Office, the Kansas Department of Health and Human Services, the Bureau of Alcohol, Beverage Control, the U.S Postal Inspector and the Sedgwick County District Attorney’s Office.

Lt. Jeffrey Easter, of the Wichita Police Department, was assigned to supervise the yearlong investigation that operated from the Epic Center. Much of the funding for the task force was provided through the assistance of Congressman Todd Tiahrt.

As a result of this cooperative effort of law enforcement agencies, 39 individuals, most of whom are members or affiliates of the Crips organization, have been indicted by Federal Grand Juries on charges that include burglaries, drive-by shootings, illegal narcotic operations, prostitution, and robberies. In addition, the task force also solved the homicides of Mr. David Barney in 2006, Ms. Tisha Jones and Mr. Keith James in 1998, and Mr. Umanah Smith in 2004.

Twenty-eight of those indictments are related to Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) indictments, as outlined in a September 28, 2007 news conference by U.S. Attorney Eric Melgren. An additional 11 federal indictments were filed against the following:

1. James A. Jones, Possession of firearm and ammunition
2. Anthony R. Grayson, Distribution cocaine
3. Derek D. Hubbard, Possession firearm by felon and possession of ammunition
4. Eugene W. Nicholson, Possession with the intent to distribute cocaine and carry firearm in relations to drug trafficking
5. Latisha L. Wheeler, Possession with intent to distribute cocaine
6. Adrian D. Brown, Possession cocaine, possession with the intent to distribute cocaine and carry firearm in relation to drug trafficking
7. Manuel A. Roach, Possession firearm by felon and possession firearm with altered serial number
8. Corey L. Cornelius, Bank robbery and carry firearm during crime of violence
9. Matthew A. Gilkey, two counts possession firearm by felon
10. Abraham M. Ramirez, Social Security Fraud, false claims of U.S. Citizenship, wire fraud, and aggravated identify theft
11. Laqueta R. Harris, two Counts of Fraud

The Cold Case investigation is ongoing and there will be additional charges filed against other gang members and their associates.

Throughout this unprecedented investigation, the Cold Case Task Force investigators, were involved in investigative activities such as:

- Executing 69 federal search warrants throughout Sedgwick and Butler Counties and Houston, Texas.
- Traveling to 8 states beyond Kansas to interview witnesses
- Working with more than 200 law enforcement personnel from members of the task force to execute 24 federal search warrants on May 1, 2007.
- Partnering with the U.S. departments of Housing and Urban Development and Health and Human Services to investigate financial fraud being committed by gang members and their family members.
- Using the unprecedented approach of utilizing the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) to prosecute members of an organized criminal street gang.

In addition to the indictments being issued against these violent gang members seizure applications have and will continue to be made regarding seizing the gang members' assets. Thus far asset seizures include 30 vehicles, several homes, and nearly two hundred thousand dollars in cash. In addition, a large quantity of cocaine, crack cocaine and several weapons have also been seized.

The Wichita Police Department will continue to aggressively investigate gang organizations that are committing criminal activities in our community. We will pursue charges in both state and federal district courts as we strive to make Wichita a safe and secure community.

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