



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

TODD P. GRAVES

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Note: A photograph regarding this press release is available for publication and can be accessed at www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow

U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE RECOGNIZED FOR WORK ON CASE INVOLVING MULTIPLE ROBBERIES

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that the Chief of the Organized Crime Strike Force, an Assistant U.S. Attorney and a paralegal from the U.S. Attorney's Office were recognized by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department for their work on a case involving more than 30 robberies in the area.

Paul S. Becker, Assistant U.S. Attorney and Chief of the Organized Crime Strike Force, **Bruce E. Clark**, Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Organized Crime Strike Force, and **Sharon Hutsler**, paralegal in the Strike Force Unit, were each presented a certificate of appreciation by Kansas City Police Chief Richard Easley this morning at the Kansas City Police Department.

"These individuals have each had long and outstanding careers representing the interests of justice," Graves said.

Becker, Clark, and Hutsler each received an award for their contributions to the prosecution and conviction of 11 suspects in a chain of high profile robberies in Missouri and Kansas. Special Agent **Doug Fencl**, with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Special Agent **Eric White**, of the Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigations, also received certificates of appreciation for their contributions to the case.

The case involved robberies dating back to 1996. The suspects included Angelo Porrello and his son Joseph Porrello, both of Kansas City; Michael Hatcher, of Grandview, Mo.; and Nathaniel Kenny, Karl Carter, Torin Riley, Antonio Mitchell, Keith Rayford, James Anthony Gillihan, Clarence D. Burnett, and Thomas Benton, all of Kansas City.

The chain of robberies included Meierotto's Midwest Jewelry and Tivol Jewelry, among several other businesses.

At the time of their conviction, the Porrellos were required to forfeit approximately \$3.8 million in cash or property to the United States, representing the wholesale value of merchandise that was taken in the robberies of Tivol Jewelry and Meierotto's Midwest Jewelry. Angelo Porrello and Joseph Porrello also were sentenced to 39 years and 35 years in federal prison, respectively. The Porrellos were convicted by a federal trial jury on March 7, 2001, for their involvement in the conspiracy.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow