



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TWO KC MEN INDICTED IN DRUG TRAFFICKING CONSPIRACY, TURF WARS WITH RIVAL GANGS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that two Kansas City, Mo., men have been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges related to a drug trafficking conspiracy that erupted in turf wars with rival street gangs.

Jamal T. Norris, 21, and **Steve L. Wright, Jr.**, 20, both of Kansas City, Mo., were charged in a 21-count superseding indictment that was returned under seal by a federal grand jury in Kansas City on Oct. 8, 2003. That indictment was unsealed and made public upon **Wright's** arrest and initial court appearance on Oct. 9, 2003. In a detention hearing today, the court ordered **Wright** to be held in federal custody until his trial, which has not yet been scheduled. **Norris** was already in federal custody from an earlier indictment.

Today's indictment alleges that **Norris** and **Wright** participated in a conspiracy to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, as well as ecstasy and marijuana, between Jan. 1, 2000, and Dec. 31, 2002. During the conspiracy, the indictment alleges, the co-conspirators repeatedly obtained controlled substances from various sources for resale, and also obtained and possessed firearms and other weapons in order to protect their drug supplies and the proceeds of their drug sales. These weapons were allegedly used by **Norris** and **Wright** in turf wars with rival groups over areas in which drugs were illegally sold. Firearms were also used in armed robberies of other drug dealers in order to steal their supplies of illegal drugs, which were then sold by the conspirators, the indictment charges.

Count One of the indictment alleges that the following acts, among others, were taken by the defendants in the course of the drug trafficking conspiracy:

- * **Norris** and **Wright** allegedly often stole or otherwise procured stolen vehicles.
- * On June 13, 2000, **Wright** and another unidentified person allegedly used firearms to shoot at two other men at the intersection of 33rd and Chestnut in Kansas City, Mo.

* On May 29, 2001, **Wright**, allegedly driving a stolen vehicle, intentionally struck a police officer with that vehicle in order to avoid arrest.

Six counts of the federal indictment allege that **Norris** was in possession with intent to distribute more than five grams of crack cocaine in Jackson County on six separate occasions from March 1, 2000 to April 24, 2002.

Three counts of the federal indictment allege that **Norris** was in possession with intent to distribute marijuana in Jackson County on three separate occasions from March 1, 2000 to April 24, 2001.

Three counts of the federal indictment allege that **Norris** carried a firearm – including a Glock semi-automatic .9mm pistol, a Taurus .357 caliber revolver and a Norinco AK-47 semi-automatic rifle – during the drug-trafficking crimes alleged in Counts Two, Five and Seven of the indictment.

Count Nine of the federal indictment alleges that **Wright** and **Norris** were in possession with intent to distribute more than five grams of crack cocaine in Jackson County on Oct. 3, 2001.

Count Ten of the federal indictment alleges that **Wright** and **Norris** were in possession with intent to distribute marijuana in Jackson County on Oct. 3, 2001.

Count Eleven of the federal indictment alleges that **Wright** and **Norris** were in possession with intent to distribute ecstasy in Jackson County on Oct. 3, 2001.

Count Twelve of the federal indictment alleges that **Wright** and **Norris** were in possession of firearms in furtherance of the drug trafficking crimes alleged in Counts Nine, Ten and Eleven.

Count Thirteen of the federal indictment alleges that **Norris** distributed crack cocaine in Jackson County on April 8, 2002.

Count Eighteen of the federal indictment alleges that **Norris** was in possession of two 9mm Ruger handguns and a 7.62 Norinco Brand 90 Sportster assault rifle in furtherance of the conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine and other controlled substances alleged in Count One of the indictment.

Count Twenty of the federal indictment alleges that **Wright** distributed more than 50 grams of crack cocaine to an unindicted co-conspirator in Jackson County on Nov. 19, 2002.

Count Twenty-One of the federal indictment is a forfeiture count, which would require **Norris** and **Wright** to forfeit to the United States any property derived from the conspiracy, including approximately \$21,791 recovered from a residence and approximately \$1,550 recovered from Norris during the execution of a search warrant on April 24, 2002.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in the indictment are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Charles E. Ambrose, Jr., and Candace Cole. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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