



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UPDATE: PROJECT CEASEFIRE
KC, INDEPENDENCE FELONS INDICTED
FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARMS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that six felons were indicted today, in separate and unrelated cases, by a federal grand jury for violating federal firearms laws. The indictments are part of Project Ceasefire, the district's ongoing anti-crime initiative.

* **Michael E. Tutor**, 30, of Independence, Mo., was indicted by a federal grand jury in Kansas City for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Tutor** was in possession of a Titan .25 caliber pistol on Sept. 22, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Tutor** has two 1998 criminal felony convictions for unlawful use of a weapon and ethnic intimidation.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelsen. It was investigated by the Independence, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Terry D. Davis**, 21, of Kansas City, Mo., was indicted by a federal grand jury in Kansas City for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Davis** was in possession of a Glock 9 mm semi-automatic pistol on Sept. 21, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Davis** has three 2001 criminal felony convictions for robbery, forgery and possession of a controlled substance.

Davis originally was charged in a criminal complaint filed in federal court on Sept. 25, 2003, in Kansas City. Today's indictment replaces that criminal complaint.

According to an affidavit filed in support of the complaint, law enforcement officers allegedly discovered **Davis** was in possession of the firearm while attempting to talk with him on Sept. 21, 2003, at 510 Westport Road. At that time, **Davis** allegedly refused to talk with the officers, and, shortly after, **Davis** struggled with law enforcement officers and was placed under arrest, according to the affidavit. Upon searching **Davis**, law enforcement officers allegedly discovered the firearm, which was loaded with 10 rounds of ammunition, the affidavit states.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelsen. It was investigated by the Independence, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Carlos D. Hermitt**, 23, of Kansas City, Mo., was indicted by a federal grand jury in Kansas City for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Hermitt** was in possession of a Sturm 9 mm pistol on Aug. 13, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Hermitt** has a 1998 criminal felony conviction delivery of a controlled substance.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul S. Becker. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Malvin M. Benjamin**, 28, of Kansas City, Mo., was indicted by a federal grand jury in Kansas City for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Benjamin** was in possession of a Smith and Wesson .40 caliber semi-automatic pistol on Jan. 5, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Benjamin** has a 2001 criminal felony conviction for possession of a controlled substance and two 1995 criminal felony convictions for trafficking and sale of a controlled substance

The federal indictment also alleges that **Benjamin** was in possession with intent to distribute cocaine on Jan. 5, 2003.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David A. Barnes. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Antonio M. Slater**, 27, of Kansas City, Mo., was indicted by a federal grand jury in Kansas City for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Slater** was in possession of a .357 Ruger, Security-Six revolver on Sept. 27, 2003, in Kansas City. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Slater** has one 1994 criminal felony conviction for robbery and two criminal felony convictions for possession of a controlled substance in 1995 and 2002.

Slater originally was charged in a criminal complaint filed in federal court on Sept. 29, 2003, in Kansas City. Today's indictment replaces that criminal complaint.

According to an affidavit filed in support of the complaint, law enforcement officers were working a DWI checkpoint when they allegedly discovered **Slater** was in possession of the firearm. At that time, **Slater** was a passenger of a vehicle driven by another individual. A 12-year-old boy also was in the vehicle. A computer check revealed **Slater** had a warrant for non-appearance, the affidavit states.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael J. Hunt. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Jason W. Lancaster**, 25, of Kansas City, Mo., was indicted by a federal grand jury in Kansas City for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Lancaster** was in possession of a Smith and Wesson 9 mm handgun on July 29, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Lancaster** has a 1996 criminal felony conviction for forgery.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael J. Hunt. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in these indictments 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.

Project Ceasefire

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms for federal prosecution. Project Ceasefire has resulted in federal charges against 498 defendants, and convictions against 418 of those defendants, including 392 who pleaded guilty and 26 who were convicted at trial. A total of 367 of the 418 convicted defendants have been sentenced, and 51 currently await sentencing hearings.

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