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TWO SACRAMENTO MEN RECEIVE LONG PRISON TERMS ON DRUG AND WEAPONS POSSESSION CHARGES

FBI's Safe Streets Task Force and the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department Investigation Brings Convictions

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that United States District Judge Lawrence K. Karlton yesterday sentenced MARSHALL LYNN McCARTER, 30, of Sacramento, to nine years and two months in prison for being a felon in possession of a firearm. On November 5, 2008, Senior United States District Judge Edward J. Garcia sentenced MARQUES DeWAYNE WATKINS, 22, of Sacramento to eight years and four months for drug trafficking.

These cases were the product of the FBI's "Safe Streets Task Force" and the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department. In partnership with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, the FBI maintains 134 Safe Streets Task Forces to address the drug and violent crime problem throughout the United States by aggressively investigating, disrupting, and dismantling violent street gangs and prison gangs. In Sacramento, the Safe Streets Task Force focuses on gang and drug-related violence through proactive and coordinated investigations into violations involving drug conspiracies and firearms offenses. Through the task force, the FBI works closely with the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department, expanding cooperation and communication among law enforcement agencies, increasing productivity and avoiding the duplication of investigative efforts.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Sean C. Flynn, who prosecuted the cases, McCARTER was arrested in south Sacramento in September 2007 after he was found in possession of a loaded revolver. During the course of his arrest, McCARTER fought with the responding deputies for over two minutes, going so far as attempting to gain control of both his handgun and one deputy's service weapon. Prior to this arrest, McCARTER had been convicted of assault with a deadly weapon (twice); crack cocaine possession; crack cocaine sales; car theft; and driving under the influence of alcohol (twice). McCARTER, pleaded guilty to a single count of being a felon in possession of a firearm on March 4, 2008. At sentencing yesterday, Judge Karlton described McCARTER as a "danger to society."

WATKINS was arrested in South Sacramento in September 2007 after he was found in possession of 48 grams of crack cocaine and a loaded .357 caliber handgun. WATKINS had prior convictions for methamphetamine sales, marijuana possession, and domestic violence. He pleaded guilty to possession of crack cocaine with intent to distribute on September 8, 2008.

"These cases are further examples of the outstanding cooperation between state and federal law enforcement agencies working to remove armed drug dealers and armed felons from our

streets. These sentences send an important message to those who would ignore federal firearms and drug laws – the penalties are severe,” said United States Attorney Scott.

FBI Special Agent in Charge Drew Parenti said, “Since 1992 the FBI has been very successful in utilizing the Safe Streets Violent Crime Initiative with our law enforcement partners across the country to help combat violent crime. The two cases cited here are further proof that this approach to rooting out the criminals plaguing our neighborhoods, from street level thugs up through gang crew leaders, is working.”

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