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United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton
Middle District of Florida

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CONTACT: STEVE COLE

PHONE: (813) 274-6136

FAX: (813) 274-6300

TAMPA DRAK GANG MEMBER SENTENCED FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING

Tampa, Florida - U.S. Attorney A. Brian Albritton announces that Senior U.S. District Judge William J. Castagna today sentenced Adrian Lorenzo Thomas (age 30, of Tampa) to 24 years and 6 months in federal prison for possessing with intent to distribute crack cocaine and cocaine. Thomas, a member of the Drak street gang, was convicted by a federal jury in March of this year. His lengthy sentence resulted from his substantial history of violent crimes and drug offenses.

According to court documents, on March 5, 2005, Thomas was arrested with crack cocaine after he agreed to distribute crack to a confidential informant. A search of his vehicle resulted in the seizure of additional crack cocaine. On December 8, 2006, Thomas was stopped in a vehicle he was driving by a Tampa Police officer, who located crack cocaine and almost a pound of cocaine powder in the vehicle. When the officer attempted to arrest Thomas, Thomas punched him and fled. Officers eventually arrested Thomas and found additional cocaine and crack in a vehicle that Thomas had been observed driving several days earlier.

This is another case prosecuted as a part of the Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Comprehensive Anti-Gang Initiative (CAGI). Tampa/Hillsborough is one of 12 sites selected nationwide to pilot a strategic, holistic gang violence reduction initiative. United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton is coordinating the

PSN CAGI effort, which has been expanded to include the entire Tampa Bay Area, in cooperation with federal, state, and local law enforcement officials, Hillsborough County Criminal Justice Office, and a plethora of community-based, faith-based, and service providing organizations. The program's objective is to reduce criminal gangs, violent crime, and illegal drugs and guns through swift and thorough enforcement and prosecution along with prevention and re-entry efforts.

This case was investigated by the Tampa Police Department, Gang Suppression Unit. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jeffrey S. Downing.