

For Immediate Release  
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**TWO NAVAJO MEN PLEAD GUILTY TO FEDERAL  
VOLUNTARY MANSLAUGHTER CHARGES**

*Victim was Killed in Littlewater, New Mexico on September 4, 2010*

ALBUQUERQUE – This afternoon, during separate proceedings in federal court in Albuquerque, **Brian Thompson**, 20, and **Presley Shorty**, 22, entered guilty pleas to offenses related to the death of 42-year-old Vinton Wally and an assault on his 24-year-old son, Nathaniel Wally, in Littlewater, New Mexico, located within the Navajo Indian Reservation, on September 4, 2010. Thompson, a resident of Standing Rock, New Mexico, and Shorty, a resident of Littlewater, are enrolled members of the Navajo Nation, as was Mr. Wally.

Thompson pled guilty to a two-count information charging him with voluntary manslaughter, and use of a firearm in relation to a crime of violence under a plea agreement with the United States Attorney's Office. Thompson also entered a guilty plea to Count 4 of the indictment filed in the case, charging him with assault resulting in serious bodily injury. At sentencing, Thompson faces a maximum 15-year prison sentence on the voluntary manslaughter offense; a mandatory 10-year term of imprisonment on the firearms offense that must run consecutive to any sentence imposed on the other two offenses; and a maximum 10-year prison sentence on the assault offense.

Shorty pled guilty to an information charging him with voluntary manslaughter under a plea agreement with the United States Attorney's Office, and faces a maximum 15-year prison sentence.

Thompson and Shorty have been in federal custody since their arrests on September 17, 2010 and September 23, 2010, respectively. Both will remain detained pending sentencing

hearings, which have yet to be scheduled.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that the charges against Thompson and Shorty and their two co-defendants arose out of a gang-related confrontation that occurred in the early morning hours of September 4, 2010 in a Native Housing Authority complex in Littlewater. Thompson, Shorty, Kelvin Augustine, 20, of Crownpoint, and Byron Pahe, 20, of Crownpoint, initially were charged in a criminal complaint filed on September 6, 2010. Thereafter, the four men were indicted on September 29, 2010.

According to the criminal complaint, at approximately 1:00 a.m. on September 4, 2010, the four defendants, alleged members of a local gang called the "Dark Side Boys," went to the housing complex in a sedan driven by Augustine with the intention of provoking a confrontation with members of the Wally family. At the complex, Shorty and Pahe got out of the sedan and provoked Vinton and Nathaniel Wally into a physical altercation. During the altercation, Shorty instructed Thompson, who remained in the sedan, to shoot Vinton Wally. Thompson fired three shots, one of which struck Vinton Wally. Thompson drove the sedan for a short stance while Shorty and Pahe ran behind it. Thompson then fired another two shots, including one that struck Nathaniel Wally. Vinton and Nathaniel Wally were taken to the Crownpoint Indian Health Services facility where Vinton Wally was pronounced dead on arrival, and Nathaniel Wally was treated for a gunshot wound to the back.

In his plea agreement, Thompson admitted shooting Vinton Wally and Nathaniel Wally with a revolver and that Vinton Wally died and Nathaniel Wally suffered serious bodily injury as a result of his unlawful conduct. In his plea agreement, Shorty admitted that he directed Thompson to fire the revolver and that Thompson complied by firing the shot that killed Vinton Wally.

On February 18, 2011, co-defendant Pahe entered a guilty plea to a misdemeanor information charging him with simple assault and admitted that he was involved in the physical altercation outside Vinton Wally's residence on September 4, 2010. At sentencing, Pahe faces up to six-months' imprisonment. Pahe remains on release under pretrial supervision pending his July 14, 2011 sentencing date.

Proceeding against co-defendant Augustine are continuing. Charges in indictments are only accusations. All criminal defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety, Crownpoint Division, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jack E. Burkhead.

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