



Department of Justice

Office of the United States Attorney
Western District of Wisconsin

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JULY 22, 2009
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**Madison Man Sentenced to 15 Years in Federal Prison
for Illegal Possession of Gun**

Madison, Wis. - Stephen P. Sinnott, Acting United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Laqueiton D. Branch, 28, Madison, was sentenced today by Chief U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to 15 years in prison, without the possibility of parole, for unlawfully possessing a loaded pistol as a convicted felon. Branch pleaded guilty to this charge on May 13, 2009.

On November 22, 2008, Branch was a passenger in his own car that was stopped for suspended registration. Madison police officers determined the driver was under the influence and the driver was arrested. Officers could see marijuana in the car, and when they searched the car, they recovered a loaded .380 pistol in the glove box. Branch was advised of his rights and he admitted possessing the firearm.

Branch was sentenced to 15 years in prison because under federal law he is an Armed Career Criminal. Defendants with three or more violent felony or serious drug convictions are deemed Armed Career Criminals and subject to mandatory minimum 15-year sentences. Branch is an Armed Career Criminal because he has four prior Robbery - Use of Force convictions.

The charge against Branch was the result of an investigation conducted by the Madison Police Department and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rita M. Rumbelow.

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