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News Release

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Federal jury convicts two men for 2007 home invasion and murders

MINNEAPOLIS – Earlier today in federal court, a jury found two men guilty of the March 23, 2007, murders of Brittany Kekedakis, age 15, Maria McLay, age 32, and Otahl Saunders, age 31, following a home invasion in St. Paul. After an eight-day trial, the jury convicted Tyvarus Lee Lindsey, age 29, and Rashad Raleigh, age 33, of three counts of murder resulting from possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug-trafficking offense and one count of possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug-trafficking offense.

Upon hearing the jury's verdict, U.S. Attorney B. Todd Jones said, "While no court action can bring peace to the families of those murdered or comfort to the children left behind, we hope this conviction provides a sense of justice. These two dangerous criminals will never victimize another human being again."

"Our investigation never lost site of its main objective: justice for the three people who were brutally murdered in this senseless crime," said St. Paul Police Chief Thomas Smith. "I am very proud of our investigators' hard work. Our department is extremely grateful to the U.S. Attorney's Office for its cooperation on this case, and to the jurors whose verdict today will hopefully help the victims' loved ones continue their healing process."

The evidence presented at trial proved that on March 23, 2007, Lindsey, also known as Little Stick, and Raleigh, also known as Shoddy, committed the crimes charged against them. On that day, officers responded to a call from the 200 block of Burgess Avenue in St. Paul at about 6:40 a.m. Upon arriving at the house that was the subject of the call, officers found Saunders' dead body as well as the bodies of Maria McLay, Saunders' live-in girlfriend, and her daughter, Brittany Kekedakis. McLay's other two children, ages 7 and 10 at the time, had run to a relative's house for help. They witnessed much of the crime but were not physically harmed.

For their crimes, the men face a potential maximum penalty of life in prison. United States District Court Judge Joan N. Ericksen will determine their sentences at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled. Both defendants remain in custody. At present, they are serving prison terms on unrelated state charges.

This case is the result of an investigation by the St. Paul Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with assistance from the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office and the Minnesota Department of Corrections. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jeffrey S. Paulsen and Christian S. Wilton.

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