



U.S. Department of Justice

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Northern District of New York*

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NEWS RELEASE

November 23, 2010

RICHARD HARTUNIAN, United States Attorney, Northern District of New York, in conjunction with WILLIAM FITZPATRICK, Onondaga County District Attorney, announce that **DEREK WILLIAMS**, age 21, of Syracuse, New York, was charged by Complaint today in U.S. District Court in Syracuse with multiple crimes relating to his involvement in the murder of Tavorn Hunter on October 24, 2010. The charges include the following: (1) conspiracy to engage in a Hobbs Act robbery of marijuana, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1951; (2) conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute marijuana, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846; and (3) aiding and abetting the use and carry of a weapon during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime, with such weapon being discharged, resulting in the death of a person, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 924(c) and (j) and 2.

The Complaint alleges that **WILLIAMS** used his cell phone to order a quantity of marijuana from Hunter, and then enlisted 17 year old Shakeem Moore into a scheme to rob the marijuana from Hunter at gunpoint. Moore met Hunter in front of a store at East Colvin and South State Streets in Syracuse, at which time the two engaged in a struggle as Moore attempted to carry-out the robbery. The struggle ended when Moore momentarily freed himself from Hunter's grasp and fired one shot from his .40 caliber handgun into Hunter's chest, killing him. The entire incident was captured on surveillance videotape. Moore has been charged in Onondaga County Court with Second Degree Murder and faces a sentence of 25 years to life in prison if convicted.

If convicted on these federal charges **WILLIAMS** faces up to life imprisonment without the possibility of release, up to five years of supervised release following any period of incarceration and a fine of up to \$250,000.¹

This prosecution resulted from an investigation undertaken by the Syracuse Police Department, in coordination with the Syracuse Gang Violence Task Force, which is comprised of agents and detectives from the following agencies: United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (Syracuse Office), the Syracuse Police Department, the Onondaga County Sheriff's Department, the New York State Police, and the U.S. Marshal's Service.

Additionally, this prosecution is emblematic of the continued efforts of the Onondaga County District Attorney's Office and the United States Attorney's Office in Syracuse to work closely together to address violent and gang-related crimes in Syracuse.

Further questions or inquiries may be directed to Assistant United States Attorney John M. Katko, the prosecutor handling the case, at (315) 448-0916.

¹ The allegations contained in the Complaint are mere accusations and **WILLIAMS** is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law either by way of a guilty plea or verdict of guilty.