

Department of Justice

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Western District of New York

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TWENTY INDIVIDUALS CHARGED IN NARCOTICS CONSPIRACY

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that a federal grand jury has indicted 20 individuals involved in a major cocaine trafficking conspiracy which stretched from the Houston, Texas area to the streets on Buffalo's East Side. Two separate Indictments charge Earl Brown, Sr., 50, Franklin Richards, 30, Wilfred Wiley, 31, Anthony Clark, 46, Lester Sessum, 52, John Williams, 37, Kevin Emmons, 28, James Jones, 28, Dewayne Gray, 27, John P. Evans, 28, Alexis L. Mills, 29, Dijaon Bland, 22, Philip T. Brown, 19, John K. Hayward, 28, Demario Devon Nance, 30, Kiara McNamee, 20, Erika Gray, 30, Timothy Finch, 23, Dayshawn Brazier, 20, and Robert Cavanaugh, 49, with conspiracy to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine.

The charges carry a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison, a maximum of life, a \$10,000,000 fine or both.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorneys George C. Burgasser and Michael L. McCabe, who are handling the cases, Franklin Richards was a major supplier of cocaine to a drug trafficking organization in Buffalo known as L.R.G.P., a violent street gang named after the East Side streets of Lombard, Rother, Gibson and Playter. Richards obtained multiple kilograms of cocaine on a regular basis from Earl Brown of Houston, Texas, which was shipped or transported from the Houston area to Buffalo. Richards then distributed cocaine to Dewayne Gray, who was the leader of the L.R.G.P. organization. Gray then processed much of the cocaine into crack cocaine which was later sold by various L.R.G.P. members named in the Indictment. The cocaine was sold at various locations in the Broadway/Fillmore area of Buffalo.

During the course of the investigation, federal agents seized \$112,000 from Wilfred Wylie at the Buffalo Niagara International Airport. An additional \$107,510 was seized by the Federal Bureau of Investigation from another individual. Five handguns were also

recovered during this morning's arrests.

"As I have stated many times before, our Office is committed to working collectively with our law enforcement partners at all levels to rid the streets of our community of gangs, other organized criminal groups, and the drugs and violence often associated with them," said U.S. Attorney Hochul. "Today's developments are yet another example of numerous ongoing federal prosecutions against members and associates of such criminal organizations. Together with yesterday's racketeering conviction of a member of the violent Bailey Boys gang, these last two days serve as an example of how we in law enforcement are fully committed to returning the streets of our community to law abiding residents."

U.S. Attorney Hochul also asked that members of the public continue to partner with law enforcement officers so that these efforts can continue.

The Indictments are the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Safe Streets Task Force, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Christopher M. Piehota, the Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Wilbert L. Plummer, Acting Special Agent in Charge, New York Field Division, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco under the direction of Resident Agent in Charge Frank Christiano, the Buffalo Police Department, under the direction of Commissioner Daniel Derenda, and the New York State Police, under the direction of Major Christopher Cummings.

The fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime is merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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