

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI  
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2012**



Felicia C. Adams  
United States Attorney  
Northern District of Mississippi

The Honorable Felicia C. Adams has served as the Presidentially appointed U.S. Attorney since July 2011. William C. Martin is the First Assistant. John Marshall Alexander and Ralph M. Dean serve as the Criminal Chief and Civil Chief, respectively. Chad Lamar is the Senior Litigation Counsel and Jim Allen is the Administrative Officer. Currently, there are twenty AUSAs and twenty-five support staff.



Pictured (left to right) Jim Allen, AO, Bill Martin, FAUSA, Felicia Adams, USA, John Alexander, Criminal Chief , Ralph Dean, Civil Chief and Chad Lamar, SLC

The men and women of the USAO work diligently to enforce federal laws, keep our nation safe, and improve the quality of life for our citizens. Thus, we seek

to prioritize cases that will have a meaningful impact upon our district.

The USAO's mission is:

- The presentation of criminal cases brought by the Federal Government;
- The litigation and defense of civil cases in which the United States is a party;
- The handling of criminal and civil appellate cases before the United States Court of Appeals;
- The collection of debts owed the Federal Government that are administratively uncollectible; and
- The role of liaison with federal, state, local and tribal law enforcement offices, and with members of the community on various crime reduction programs.

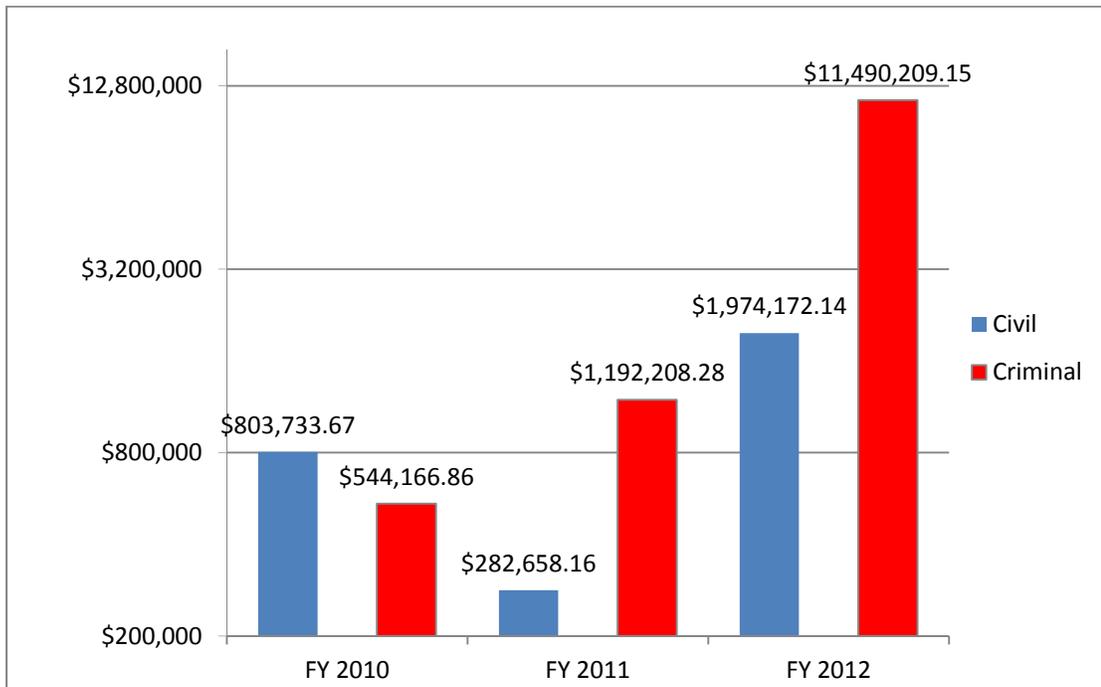
Additionally, national priorities, which are set by the United States Attorney General, include:

- Protect against terrorism and threats to National Security;
- Protect against violent crime;
- Protect against financial fraud; and
- Protect against threats to the most vulnerable.

Despite weathering budget cuts from Congress and staff reductions caused by the continuing Department of Justice hiring freeze, the USAO dedicated our efforts

to the three pillars of our work – enforcement, prevention and community trust. As a result, the USAO, along with its agency partners, made significant accomplishments in 2012. Among them:

Our office collected over seventeen million dollars in fines, forfeitures, restitution and judgments.



Of this amount, \$11,490,209.15 was collected in criminal actions and \$1,974,172.14 was collected in civil actions. Additionally, the office collected \$3,931,728.00 in criminal and civil forfeitures. The USAO is dedicated to protecting the public and recovering funds for the federal treasury and for victims of federal crime. We will continue to hold accountable those who seek to profit from their illegal activities.

Additionally, on September 27, 2012, in conjunction with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the integration of the University of Mississippi by James Meredith, the USAO hosted Attorney General Eric Holder, EOUSA Director Marshall Jarrett, and twenty-five United States Attorneys from various districts across the nation.



EOUSA Executive Director Marshall Jarrett and members of the AGAC Civil Rights Subcommittee at the James Meredith statue on the Ole Miss campus

AG Holder personally visited with the federal judges of our district, our federal law enforcement partners and our employees, thus, reinforcing the importance of our mission.



AG Holder addressing staff and federal law enforcement partners at the USA

To further highlight the significance of AG Holders' visit to our district and the University, the USAO co-hosted a pair of panel discussions focusing on emerging issues in civil rights. The first panel focused on issues related to education: bullying and the school to prison pipeline. The second panel dealt with human trafficking. Ending this modern-day form of slavery is a priority for the Attorney General and our district.



AG Holder and USA Adams

The visit by AG Holder and Director Jarrett was the crowning point of a successful year for the USAO. Here are some of the highlights for 2012.

## ENFORCEMENT



Criminal Division Staff

### National Security

Terrorism remained the top priority of the Department of Justice and the USAO continued to focus on matters related to international and domestic terrorism, terrorism financing, threats, hoaxes and other violations of law affecting our national security.

The strategic plan for this office is to protect our nation, state and citizens against the threat of terrorism by: (1) preventing, disrupting and defeating terrorist operations before they occur; (2) developing and implementing all available resources to investigate terrorist incidents, primarily by training all relevant personnel and by thorough information sharing at all levels; and (3) bringing

perpetrators to justice by vigorously prosecuting those who have committed, or intend to commit, terrorist acts, including fund raising efforts in our district or elsewhere in the United States.

A case which illustrates the USAO's efforts to thwart terrorist activities within the district is U.S. v. Pillault. Pillault, a former student, made threats over an internet video game chat room to kill people and destroy buildings at a local high school. He was indicted in 2012 and the case is set for trial.

### **Cyber Security**

The USAO is working with the FBI to prioritize national security cyber-crime and to develop a protocol to review cases relating to this growing threat.

### **Violent Crime**

The reduction of violent crime is critical to the success of our district. It is a basic tenet that our citizens should be safe in their neighborhoods, homes, schools and places of business. State and local law enforcement officers in our district have faced dwindling budgets and resources. To assist our state and local partners, the USAO has increased its efforts to bring cases federally, where possible as penalties are often greater than in the state system. The USAO has worked diligently to reduce violent crime to improve public safety.

In U.S. v. Harris, Powell and Marshall, three defendants were indicted in 2012 for an attempted home invasion to acquire ten kilograms of cocaine. The case, investigated by BATF, is pending trial in 2013.

Numerous bank robberies were successfully prosecuted in 2012 including those charged in U.S. v. House, U.S. v. Hancock, U.S. v. Wagner, U.S. v. Maynard, and U.S. v. Kyzer and Miller (two 32 year sentences).

A robbery of a federal firearms licensee was the subject of U.S. v. Hearn and Montgomery. Montgomery pled guilty and was sentenced to 120 months. Hearn pled guilty and is awaiting sentencing.

Moreover, the importance of our work in this area was given national attention during the manhunt and subsequent capture of alleged kidnapper and murderer, Adam Mayes, in Guntown, Mississippi. On April 27, 2012, Mayes allegedly kidnapped Jo Ann Bain and her three daughters in Hardeman County, Tennessee, and subsequently brought them to Guntown. The FBI put Mayes on its Ten Most Wanted list. Due to the combined efforts of the Hardeman County Sheriff's Office (Tennessee), Union County Sheriff's Office (Mississippi), Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, FBI, Mississippi Bureau of Investigation, United States Marshal's Service, the 25<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Attorney's office (Tennessee), and the United States Attorney's offices for the Western District of Tennessee and the Northern District of Mississippi, Adam Mayes was captured; the

bodies of Jo Ann and Adreienne Bain were recovered; and the two younger Bain sisters, Kyliyah and Alexandria, were successfully rescued.



Press Conference in Guntown, Mississippi announcing that Mayes had been added to FBI Ten Most Wanted Fugitives

## **INITIATIVES**

### **Human Trafficking**

The USAO has committed resources to share leads and coordinate training for law enforcement to better recognize the signs of human trafficking victims, who are often hiding in plain sight. Additionally, we, our law enforcement partners and our Human Trafficking Task Force will continue to focus on prevention through the prosecution of trafficking rings, creating public awareness of the prevalence of the crime, and educating potential victims who often unwittingly place their lives in the hands of exploitative traffickers.

### **Indian Country**

We have a very small geographic area that is located in our district which is part of a Choctaw Indian reservation. The USAO vigorously prosecutes violent crime occurring on Indian Country in our district. Additionally, we have endeavored to create a close working relationship with tribal leaders, including Chief Phyllis J. Anderson.



Pictured (left to right) USA Adams, Chief Phyllis J. Anderson, John Dowdy, Criminal Chief, S.D. of MS after Chief Anderson's investiture ceremony



USA Adams with Choctaw Princesses



Pictured (left to right) USA Adams, Criminal Chief, John Alexander, FAUSA Bill Martin, and Civil Chief, Ralph Dean at investiture ceremony for Chief Phyllis J. Anderson

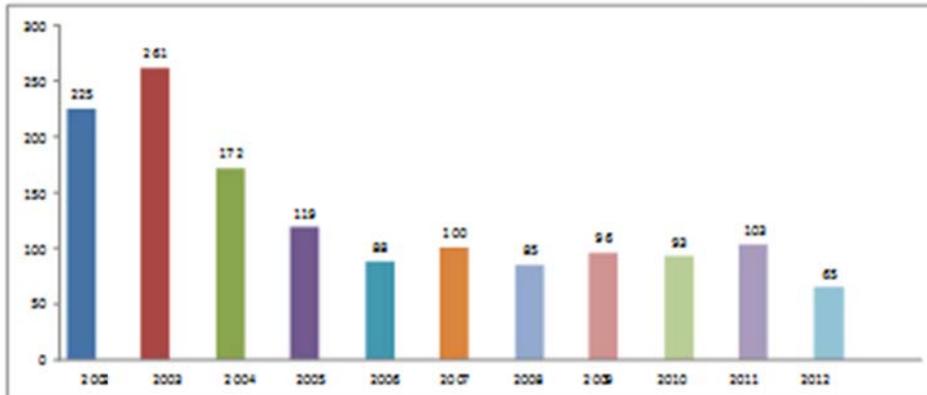
### **Reduction of Violent Crimes Through Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN) Program**

This program is designed to address the specific violent crime problems in the district. Past examples of such initiatives include “Delta Blues” and the “Small Town Initiative.” These programs were centered in Clarksdale and Greenville, two cities which experienced significant problems with violence and gun crime. The USAO has established an effective task force, consisting of federal, state and local law enforcement officials, that reviews and refers gun cases to the office for prosecution.

The efficiency of our PSN program in Greenville is demonstrated by the charts set forth below. Our Greenville Safe Neighborhood Program began in August 2004. The statistics show that there has been a significant decrease in

violent gun crimes since the inception of the program.

## GREENVILLE, MISSISSIPPI VIOLENT GUN CRIMES BY YEAR 2002-2010



GREENVILLE SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS BEGAN AUGUST 2004

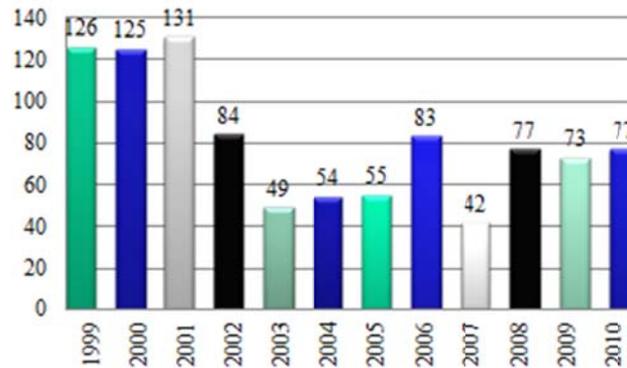
### GREENVILLE, MISSISSIPPI VIOLENT GUN CRIMES BY YEAR AND OFFENSE

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
MURDER	12	13	5	5	4	4	7	9	10	5	5
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	103	80	50	48	40	37	26	32	32	39	27
ARMED ROBBERY	93	141	94	53	36	35	40	29	45	37	22
SHOOTING INTO DWELLING	16	20	18	9	5	13	10	7	2	16	6
SHOOTING INTO VEHICLE	1	7	5	4	3	11	2	3	4	6	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>65</b>

GREENVILLE SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS BEGAN AUGUST 2004

Likewise, Clarksdale Safe Neighborhoods, begun in 2002, continued to achieve a significant reduction in violent gun crimes.

## CLARKSDALE MISSISSIPPI VIOLENT GUN CRIMES BY YEAR 1999-2010



CLARKSDALE SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS BEGAN MARCH 2002

## CLARKSDALE MISSISSIPPI VIOLENT GUN CRIMES BY YEAR AND OFFENSE

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
MURDER	5	6	4	6	2	6	2	3	4	3	4	2
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	54	49	34	30	7	12	11	27	10	32	28	32
DRIVE-BY SHOOTING	6	7	6	0	1	6	2	6	0	3	5	21
SHOOTING INTO DWELLING	31	18	17	11	10	7	4	8	5	11	6	1
ARMED ROBBERY	30	45	70	37	29	23	36	39	10	27	30	21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>77</b>

CLARKSDALE SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS BEGAN MARCH 2002

## **Reduction of Illegal Drug Trafficking**

The district has experienced a significant increase in drug trafficking. Due to our proximity to Memphis, and improved transportation infra-structure, our district has experienced growth as a drug distribution center. Interstate-55, U.S. 278, U.S. 276, U.S. 61, U.S. 82, U.S. 78 and U.S. 45 are four lane thoroughfares linking the district to the major drug corridors of I-10, I-20 and I-40. Traffickers smuggle drugs destined not only for the Northern District of Mississippi, but also for other metropolitan areas in our region.

The Lonzo Griffin Drug Trafficking Organization (“DTO”) was of regional significance and was the largest OCDETF case the DEA has ever worked in the Northern District of Mississippi. The Lonzo Griffin DTO operated out of Houston, Texas, supplying hundreds of kilograms of cocaine and thousands of pounds of marijuana to the Northern and Southern Districts of Mississippi.

The indictments and informations charged approximately twenty-four defendants with sixty plus counts of drug, firearm, and money laundering crimes, including approximately seven defendants from Texas. Two defendants with ties to a Mexican cartel remain at large. All other defendants with the exception of six pled guilty. Those defendants chose to begin trial. By the second week of trial, all the remaining defendants pled guilty. The case resulted in over \$1,000,000 in

forfeited assets which included approximately \$500,000 in United States currency. The case also resulted in the seizure of thirty-seven firearms. A majority of the defendants face a maximum of life imprisonment, and approximately eleven defendants will likely receive sentences of ten years or more.

U.S. v. Camarillo, Mendez and Nieto was another significant prosecution for our district. Three defendants were indicted, tried and convicted by a jury of heroin and cocaine trafficking in this OCDETF case named “Full Throttle.” Agents have seized over \$250,000 in narcotics.

Additional significant prosecutions include:

OCDETF “Commotion”: Ten defendants have been indicted for drug trafficking and money laundering offenses. The drug trafficking organization includes multi-district ties to Memphis, Houston and Las Vegas. Three defendants have entered guilty pleas and over \$50,000 has been forfeited thus far.

OCDETF “Brown Sugar”: Five defendants are under indictment for heroin trafficking in the Northern District of Mississippi, with ties to Chattanooga and Chicago.

OCDETF “Hampton Ends”: Twenty Mississippi cocaine dealers were indicted for trafficking cocaine from Texas. The leader of this drug trafficking organization was classified as a Regional Priority Target.

OCDETF “Snow Alley”: Eleven defendants have been indicted for major

cocaine and marijuana distribution.

OCDETF “Black Derby”: Three guilty pleas to drug conspiracy and money laundering, seizure of 5 kilograms of cocaine and over \$100,000 in currency and dismantling of a large scale cocaine distribution organization have resulted from this successful investigation and prosecution.

### **Reduction of Child Exploitation**

The USAO has aggressively prosecuted cases of child exploitation for the past three decades and has established a highly successful Project Safe Childhood (PSC) program. With the proliferation of personal computers and the corresponding use of those tools to exploit children, the office has excelled at prosecuting child pornography cases, especially cases involving the use of computers to make graphic images of child molestation for the sexual gratification of criminals. The district, like other districts across the country, has seen a decided increase in these crimes since 2008. In order to effectively combat this menace, the USAO works with its federal counterparts, FBI, ICE, Secret Service and U.S. Marshals Service, as well as state and local agencies.

Additionally, the USAO has actively pursued criminal prosecutions under the Sex Offender Registration Notification Act (SORNA). In conjunction with the U.S. Marshals Service, the USAO has very aggressively targeted prior convicted sex offenders who enter the Northern District and remain without registering their

presence as required by state and federal law. In calendar years 2011 and 2012, the USAO has charged and prosecuted some three dozen such individuals. There have been more than fifty SORNA indictments since 2009. Unlike a number of other districts who require offenders to meet certain guidelines before charging SORNA violations, the USAO is committed to charging any and all viable violations of 18 U.S.C. §2250, including offenders who temporarily visit or remain in the district without registering their presence as required.

The USAO will continue to protect the children of our district and others through the investigation and prosecution of sexual predators. Examples of cases that the USAO prosecuted in 2012 are set forth below:

U.S. v. Robinson: The defendant Brian Robinson pled guilty to creating various forms of child pornography with his five and six year old sons and distributing it to others both inside and outside of the United States. Robinson's prosecution is the result of a large-scale, ongoing, international investigation that has, to date, resulted in the arrest of twenty-seven individuals, including eight within the United States, and the identification of one hundred thirty-eight child victims. He was sentenced to serve 30 years for the charge of creation of child pornography, and 10 years for the charge of possession of child pornography. Each of those sentences is to run consecutively, for a total of 60 years in prison.

U.S. v. Gomez: The defendant was convicted by jury verdict for taking a fourteen year old child across state lines for sexual activities. He was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment and is appealing.

U.S. v. Lundy: The defendant traveled to Tupelo to engage in sex with a person believed to be a fifteen year old female. After indictment, trial and conviction, the defendant appealed and the case was affirmed by the Fifth Circuit in 2012.

U.S. v. Bowling: The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2012 dismissed the appeal of a former high school football coach who had pled guilty and received a 25 year prison sentence for sexually molesting a student who served as a football manager.

U.S. v. Bates: A tennis coach pled guilty to sexual molestation of a minor babysitter and is awaiting sentencing.

### **Public Corruption**

The USAO is committed to attacking public corruption in federal, state and local government. We recognize that our district cannot thrive until we have the honest government at every level that our citizens deserve.

## **School Officials**

Harvey Andre Franklin, Sr., waived indictment and pled guilty to a three count information charging him with conspiring to commit an offense against the United States; accepting bribes and kickbacks from a contractor with the Greenville Public School District; and stealing, embezzling, and converting to his own use federal funds.

Franklin, as superintendent and on behalf of the Greenville Public Schools (GPS), conspired with Edna Goble, on behalf of Teach to Read (TTR), to enter into various contracts whereby GPS would pay TTR approximately \$1.4 million and in return Goble would make payments to Franklin and various creditors on Franklin's behalf.

At sentencing Franklin faces a maximum possible penalty of not more than 25 years in prison, not more than \$75,000 in fines, and restitution in the amount of loss.

## **Housing Officials**

Ann Jefferson, Executive Director of the South Delta Regional Housing Authority (SDRHA) was convicted of two counts of embezzlement, two counts of obstruction of justice, and three counts of witness intimidation. Jefferson was found to have embezzled federal funds from several housing authority accounts for her own use and to have retaliated against several employees when she found out those employees were cooperating with federal investigators.

Jefferson was sentenced to serve 32 months in prison and to pay restitution in the amount of \$41,178.90.



U.S. v. Jefferson trial team (left to right) Dustin Blount, Susan Bradley, Robin Garrison, Bob Norman, and Brian McCloskey, FBI RAC

## **Financial Fraud**

The USAO, in conjunction with its federal law enforcement partners, continued its efforts to combat financial fraud in the district.

### **Bank Fraud**

Henry E. McCaslin, Jr. pled guilty to a one count information charging him with embezzlement while acting as President and CEO of First National Bank, Rosedale, Mississippi. McCaslin was sentenced to serve 63 months in federal prison, followed by a term of supervised release of 5 years. He was also ordered to

pay restitution in the amount of \$1,530,000.

### **Telemarketing Scam on Vulnerable and Elderly**

Multiple defendants were indicted for conspiring to commit wire fraud in violation of Title 18, U.S.C.§1349. The conspiracy involved a scheme to defraud in which co-conspirators would call victims on the telephone and inform them that they had won a large cash prize that could not be claimed until the victim had paid purported taxes and fees, via wire transmission, to a person named by the caller, who would usually be another co-conspirator or “runner.” The scheme deprived victims of moneys in excess of \$440,000. The following have pled guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and have been sentenced:

David Beasley - 262 months (21 years, 10 months);

Patrick Beasley - 190 months (15 years, 10 months);

George Coe – 175 months (14 years, 7 months);

Scott Thomas – 90 months (7 years, 6 months);

Kevin Coe – 80 months (6 years, 8 months);

Jarvis Jones – 71 months (5 years, 11 months);

Christina Richards – 48 months (4 years, 0 months); and

Timothy Allen – 87 months (7 years, 3 months)



Clyde McGee and Tiffany Stein receiving an award for their work on U.S. v. George Coe, et al.

### **Disaster Fraud**

In late April and early May 2011, two presidentially declared disasters occurred in Mississippi: the Mississippi River flooding on the western side of the state and a series of deadly tornadoes that mainly damaged the northeastern side of the state. As a result of these events, numerous individuals have filed fraudulent claims for FEMA benefits, essentially claiming damage to a residence, that for one reason or another, did not qualify for FEMA benefits. While the individual cases involve fraudulent benefits of anywhere from fifteen to thirty thousand dollars, the aggregate loss is significant. An example of this type of case is U.S. v. Ungren. Richard C. (“Chris”) Ungren pled guilty to one count of an indictment charging him

with making a materially false, fictitious, and fraudulent statement to FEMA in an application for benefits following the Mississippi River flood in May 2011.

At sentencing, he faces a maximum possible penalty of 30 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and 5 years supervised release.

In 2012, eight such disaster cases were indicted.

### **Environmental Offenses**

Mari Leigh Childs, former operator of several waste water and drinking systems in North Mississippi, pled guilty to one count of submitting false material statements in regard to Childs' operation of various publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities and public drinking water systems and to one count of failing to establish and maintain records, make reports, and sample effluents as required by the Clean Water Act. Childs was sentenced to probation for a period of 5 years, including 6 months of house confinement with electronic monitoring. She was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$349,000.



Robert Mims received an award for successful FEMA prosecutions

## **Operation Secondhand Smoke**

Secondhand Smoke is a nationwide investigation handled by the USAO, the FBI and ATF. It has received national, regional and local media attention.

Cigarette manufacturers and wholesalers illegally divert cigarettes into states subject to the Master Settlement Agreement (the landmark settlement between Big Tobacco and the states) by falsely reporting the sale of cigarettes into non-MSA states such as Mississippi to avoid MSA payments and escrow payments.

One case which resulted from this investigation is U.S. v. Ammerman. Bob and Mike Ammerman pled guilty to a three count information charging them with making and keeping false records regarding the manufacture and sale of cigarettes. They were sentenced to serve 18 months in prison, followed by 2 years supervised release. He was also ordered to pay a \$15,000 fine and forfeited \$8,000,000 to the United States.

Moreover, dozens of other cases revealed by our investigation have been and are being prosecuted in other districts such as Oklahoma, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida and New York. As the illegal practices in the cigarette industry have been exposed, the states' Attorneys General and Tax Division have become more aggressive in their civil and criminal enforcement of their tobacco regulations and laws resulting in increased tax and penalty collections.

## **Health Care Fraud**

The USAO is a member of a task force comprised of the FBI, the Mississippi Attorney General's Office, Health and Human Services and the contractor, Advanced Med. Our asset forfeiture unit is also utilized in identifying, seizing and recovering assets in health care fraud investigations.

Operation Gravy Train is a multi-million dollar fraud, embezzlement and extortion investigation handled by the USAO and FBI. Earnest Levi "Lee" Garner and Ray Shoemaker were charged in a fourteen count indictment with paying and receiving kickbacks and bribes in connection with over \$2 million dollars in nurse contracting services provided by Lee Garner's companies to Tri-Lakes Medical Center in Batesville, Mississippi. Ray Shoemaker, the CEO of Tri-Lakes Medical Center was charged with embezzlement of hospital funds, making false statements to the USDA in connection with hospital loans, and making false statements to federal agents.

After a two-week trial, the jury deliberated for five hours before convicting both Garner and Shoemaker on all counts. Robert Corkern, the hospital administrator and a physician in Batesville, pled guilty prior to the trial and David Chandler, the Panola County Administrator, also pled guilty prior to the trial. Both Corkern and Chandler testified as government witnesses. The Garner/Shoemaker trial was the culmination of a multi-year investigation into corruption in Panola

County, Mississippi involving the FBI, USDA-OIG, HHS-OIG, and the Mississippi State Auditor's Office. The District Court has granted a motion for judgment of acquittal on all charges against Lee Garner and some of the charges against Ray Shoemaker. The USAO has filed a Notice of Appeal.



Operation Gravy Train Trial Team(left to right) Charlie Spillers, Shannon Wright, Clay Dabbs Andy Bussom, Robert Mims, Sammy Aldridge, Brenda Gill and Brian McCloskey, FBI RAC

### **Tax Fraud**

Thelbert Lamont Lesure pled guilty to count one of an indictment charging him with knowingly preparing and transmitting a fraudulent tax return to the IRS. At sentencing, he faces a maximum possible penalty of 5 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine and 3 years supervised release.

### **Civil Rights**

The USAO has an effective program to investigate and prosecute civil rights

violations. Especially sensitive and significant civil rights matters are coordinated with the Department's Civil Rights Division. The majority of civil rights cases prosecuted by the USAO involve felony crimes of deprivation of rights under color of law. These cases are mainly presented to us as use of force violations by state and local law enforcement officers. Recently, we have prosecuted several misdemeanor civil rights crimes involving theft of money by law enforcement officers while acting within the scope of their duty. A felony police brutality case by a state trooper was the subject of an indictment late in 2012.

### Civil Cases



Civil Division Staff

The USAO is also responsible for representing the United States in civil matters. Civil Division successes in 2012 include:

## **Employment Discrimination**

Atkins v. Salazar, 677 F.3d 667 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. (Miss) Dec 12, 2011) Plaintiff-Appellant David Atkins, a law enforcement park ranger, was transferred to a staff ranger position based on the conclusion of a medical review board constituted by the National Park Service (an agency of the Department of the Interior) that his uncontrolled diabetes could prevent him from safely performing his duties. Atkins filed suit under the Rehabilitation Act, claiming that his transfer amounted to discrimination on the basis of his alleged disability. The litigation focused on Atkins's challenge to the Department of the Interior's affirmative defense that Atkins's transfer was job-related and consistent with business necessity. The district court granted summary judgment for the Department of the Interior, and Atkins appealed. The 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the case.

## **Financial Litigation Unit**

U.S. v. Robert Ammerman, et al. This was a criminal restitution case involving the trafficking of contraband cigarettes. Restitution in the amount of \$6,507,894.37 was ordered. Through the joint efforts of the Criminal Division and the Financial Litigation Unit, restitution has been collected and restored to the victims.

U.S. v. Straight Creek Farms. This case was a criminal restitution case involving financial institution fraud with the agency being Department of

Agriculture/Farm Loan Program (FSA). Restitution of \$4,250,000 was ordered June 21, 2012 in this case. Through the joint efforts of the Criminal Division and Financial Litigation Unit, restitution was collected and restored to the victims in full by July 18, 2012.

## **PREVENTION**

In addition to our enforcement efforts, the USAO continued to work on preventing crime. One of the most effective ways to reduce crime is to prevent it from occurring in the first place. Experience has shown that long-term reduction in crime requires efforts to attack the causes of crime.

### **Project Safe Neighborhood**

The USAO has partnered with local churches in Clarksdale and Greenville and hosted and participated in community awareness programs designed to mentor youth and provide incentives to avoid a life of drugs and crime. Toward this end, the USAO has dedicated PSN funding to several of our faith-based partners as well as to the Clarksdale Police Department.

### **Revamping of the Reentry Program**

Launched at the Mississippi Department of Corrections in 2006, this semi-annual program provided inmates from the Parchman, Mississippi, facility with educational sessions about the personal and legal dangers of continued gang involvement and the consequences of carrying a firearm as a convicted felon. The program specifically targets those inmates who are approaching a parole or release date. This program is a joint initiative between the Mississippi Department of Corrections and the U.S. Attorney's Office, with participation from ATF, local law enforcement agencies, local clergy, local defense counsel and former inmates.

As part of our Anti-Gang Initiative, the USAO has encouraged the implementation of the Gang Resistance Education and Training “GREAT” Program throughout the district, but particularly in those cities identified as having substantial gang-related problems. We chose to emphasize this program because it is a preventative measure that has proven effective in preventing violence and reducing youth involvement in gangs. Both the cities of Clarksdale and Greenville received PSN and Anti-Gang grant funding to facilitate the implementation of the GREAT program within their middle schools.

## **COMMUNITY TRUST**

The USAO has worked diligently with our law enforcement partners to improve public trust. Law enforcement cannot be truly successful without the trust of the people we serve. The USAO is committed to breaking down barriers between law enforcement and community members and has conducted outreach events throughout the district.

In order to effect these goals, we participated in community forums in Clarksdale and Greenville. We met with the mayors of both of these cities as well as members of the community and leaders of faith-based organizations in an effort to develop strategies to combat crime, protect their citizens, and strengthened their respective communities.

In the civil rights arena, we co-hosted panel discussions on emerging issues such as bullying, the school to prison pipeline, and human trafficking. Civil rights are essential to maintaining a high quality of life in a multi-cultural community. It is essential to the continued growth of our district and our state, that we make all people feel welcome and protected.

The USAO worked with the U.S. District Court to realign the Court divisions within the district. We are committed to raising public awareness of the importance of jury diversity and jury service. The public has increased confidence in jury verdicts when the juries reflect the diversity of our district.



Pictured (left to right) Judge Glen Davidson, USA Felicia Adams, Magistrate Judge Jane Virden and Judge Sharion Aycock at the Aberdeen Courthouse

Additionally, the USAO partnered with the Court, Probation Service, and the Federal Public Defender's Office to begin development of a plan for the implementation of a reentry program for federal offenders in our district. AG Holder has established the Federal Interagency Reentry Council which signals a significant commitment of the executive branch. Further, it is a recognition that federal agencies have a stake in removing barriers to successful reentry so that motivated individuals – who have served their time and paid their debts – are able to compete for a job, attain stable housing, support their children and families, and contribute to their communities.

Several members of the USAO traveled to the Southern District of Mississippi and met with Judge Walter Gex who spoke with them about his

involvement with the reentry program in his district. Additionally, we observed a graduation ceremony for offenders who had completed the program and had an opportunity to speak with the graduates.

We also visited FCI Yazoo City and met with Warden Archie B. Longley, members of his staff and several offenders who spoke with us about reentry efforts and transitioning back into society after incarceration. Moreover, we participated in the Southeast Regional Reentry Executive Leadership Workshop in Coleman, Florida.

We also implemented practices to improve the diversity of the USAO. We created a Diversity Committee, a Mission Statement and a Diversity Operating Plan. The USAO has received training on approved Department EEO practices and standards and all managers have received training on issues of diversity and inclusion. The USAO will ensure that all hiring is conducted in accordance with EEO principles and legal requirements. Moreover, we continued our partnership with the University of Mississippi to further our commitment to obtaining not only the highest quality interns but also ensuring that minority and female candidates are given equal consideration for the program. We have developed and executed a plan for hiring, training, and retaining personnel from diverse backgrounds, including

minority and majority populations. We believe our office is more effective when we include people with different perspectives.



Pictured (left to right) Clyde McGee, Law Student Externship Coordinator; Iesha Warmack, law student intern; USA Felicia Adams; Shadeequa Smith, law student intern; and Phillip Strickland, law student intern.

At the invitation of Chief Judge Michael P. Mills, the USAO participated in a Naturalization Ceremony at the Federal Courthouse in Oxford. Judge Fred Wicker was the keynote speaker.



Pictured (left to right) Dennis Erby, U. S. Marshal, State Court Judge Fred Wicker, Judge Glen Davidson, Chief Judge Michael P. Mills and Felicia Adams, USA

USA Felicia C. Adams led the new United States citizens in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. It was a moving experience and served to remind us all of the privilege of citizenship and the responsibility of safeguarding our freedom.



USA Adams with newly naturalized citizens

## **IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF OUR WORK**

Despite budget cuts and a hiring freeze, we continued to seek strategies whereby we could improve our workplace through the implementation of best management practices, training, better communication, and coordinating civil and criminal cases. We improved our internal system with respect to streamlining communication between the Civil and Criminal Divisions and implemented strategies to leverage resources, share information, and improve effectiveness in the litigation of cases.

### **Improvement of our Technology Infrastructure**



Administrative Division Staff

The USAO improved the way we utilize technology for communication, case organization, legal research, and administrative matters to reduce costs and improve efficiency. This past year the USAO installed a new server, a new telephone system, and completed an office-wide computer refresh. Additionally, we migrated from Word Perfect to Word and provided training for all employees, and increased coordination of efforts between the various components of the USAO. Among our accomplishments this year:

**Training our Staff:** We provided training on emerging issues in the law, ethics, and EEO standards and practices. We also provided mandatory professionalism training for all AUSAs.

**Training Agents:** We conducted training programs for agents and law enforcement officers in terrorism trends and tactics, discovery, search warrants, and other topics to increase their awareness of emerging legal issues.

## **DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVICE**

While 2012 brought its share of success, the USAO experienced a tinge of sadness when it said goodbye to several long time employees who, in many respects, embodied the tenets of public service. Andy Bussom, Health Care Fraud Auditor, fifteen years; Pam Ivy, Criminal Legal Assistant, seventeen years; and Krisi Allen, Paralegal, five years all made the transition into the public sector.

Additionally, veteran prosecutor Charlie Spillers retired after serving twenty-three years in the USAO, primarily as the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force Coordinator. In addition, Charlie is a noted lecturer and widely considered to be one of the leading authorities in search and seizure law.

However, Charlie's accomplishments and contributions were not just limited to the USAO. In May 2007, Charlie deployed to Iraq and served for one-half year with the Regime Crimes Liaison Office as an Attorney Advisor to the Iraqi High Tribunal, the court that tried Sadaam Hussein, Ali Hasan Al Majid, also known as Chemical Ali and other high level members of Sadaam's regime for Crimes Against Humanity, War Crimes and Terrorism.

In July 2009, at the request of the Deputy Attorney General, Charlie returned to Iraq and served for nine months as Justice Attaché, representing the Department of Justice and the Attorney General in Iraq, and working directly with U.S. Forces in

Iraq and other agencies to develop and implement a DOJ-led U.S.-Iraqi task force on terrorist financing networks in Iraq.

The USAO thanks Charlie, Andy, Pam and Krisi for their service. While we will certainly miss the friendship, camaraderie, and expertise of these very special people, we sincerely wish them the best in their future endeavors.



USA Adams presents Charlie Spillers with a signed and framed letter from AG Holder during Charlie's retirement ceremony

## SERVING OUR DISTRICT



Staff of U.S. Attorney's Office Northern District of Mississippi

The men and women of the USAO work diligently to provide the highest quality of service to our district. We constantly seek to improve the way we conduct business and welcome your suggestions regarding how we can continue to make strides in this area. We thank our law enforcement partners, both federal and state, who risk their lives to protect public safety. We are indeed privileged to serve the citizens of the Northern District of Mississippi and we will strive to improve the quality of life in our community.