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United States Attorney's Office
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News Release

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Murder charges added in Native Mob case

MINNEAPOLIS— A federal superseding indictment filed late last week in the Native Mob case charges a previously named defendant with murder. Shawn Michael Martinez, also known as Tinez, is now charged with one count of murder resulting from the use and carrying of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence, one count of murder in aid of racketeering, one count of retaliation against a witness by murder, and one count of witness tampering by murder. He was earlier charged with conspiracy to participate in racketeering, several drug and gun charges, and witness tampering.

The superseding indictment alleges that on February 26, 2011, Martinez, aided by others, shot and killed fellow Native Mob member Jereme Kraskey. The premeditated murder was purportedly committed to keep Kraskey from offering law enforcement information and in retaliation for a mistaken belief that he had already provided information to law enforcement about the gang's activities.

Following the murder, previously named defendants Wakinyon Wakan McArthur, Shawn Michael Martinez, and Christopher Lee Wuori purportedly held an "emergency" Native Mob council meeting to discuss, among other things, the death of Kraskey. The superseding indictment also states that McArthur and Wuori aided and abetted attempted murder on March 4, 2010, when they tried to kill a man by shooting him three times with a .40-caliber handgun while he held his five-year-old daughter. Regarding that offense, the two men now face charges of assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering and use and carrying of a firearm

during and in relation to a crime of violence. Two other defendants, Anthony Francis Cree and William Earl Morris, were charged in the original indictment with those same offenses as to the March 4, 2010, shooting.

In addition, the superseding indictment charges McArthur and Wuori with aiding and abetting a gang “mission” on August 24, 2010, when members of the Native Mob shot at the occupied home of a rival drug dealer in an effort to intimidate him and discourage him from selling drugs on Native Mob turf. And on March 28, 2011, they allegedly ordered members of the Native Mob to conduct a home-invasion robbery at the Leech Lake residence of a rival drug dealer, prompting four gang members, their faces covered, to enter the home, brandishing pistols. For each of those two acts, McArthur and Wuori are now charged with use and carrying a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence.

The superseding indictment also adds a 25th member of the Native Mob gang to the case. Jesus Thomas Ali is charged with one count of conspiracy to participate in racketeering. In addition, he is charged with one count of conspiracy to use and carry firearms during and in relation to a crime of violence and two counts of possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance. Among other acts, Ali allegedly possessed with intent to distribute crack cocaine on April 19, 2005. Then, on August 11, 2011, he allegedly ordered another Native Mob member to assault someone he suspected of having stolen money from the gang. On April 11, 2012, he purportedly possessed with intent to distribute approximately six grams of a mixture containing methamphetamine. And on January 19, 2012, he allegedly informed an individual that he needed to pay the Native Mob \$1,500 or be beaten daily.

The Native Mob is a regional criminal gang that originated in Minneapolis in the early 1990s. Members routinely engage in drug trafficking, assault, robbery, and murder. Membership is estimated at 200, with new members, including juveniles, regularly recruited from communities with large, young, male, Native American populations. Association with the gang is often signified by wearing red and black clothing or sporting gang-related tattoos.

The indictments filed in this case allege that since at least the mid-1990s, the named defendants and others have conspired to conduct criminal activity through an “enterprise,” namely, the Native Mob, in violation of the federal Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (“RICO”). The indictments allege that the primary objective of this “enterprise” is to preserve, protect, promote, and enhance the Native Mob’s power, territory, and financial gains.

To that end, gang members purportedly distribute illegal drugs, from crack cocaine to ecstasy. They also reportedly provide monetary support to other members, including those incarcerated; share with one another police reports, victim statements, and other case discovery; hinder or obstruct officials from identifying or apprehending those wanted by the law; and intimidate witnesses to Native Mob crimes. Moreover, they purportedly maintain and circulate firearms for gang use and commit acts of violence, including murder, against individuals associated with rival gangs.

If convicted, the defendants in this case face a potential maximum sentence of between 20 years and life in federal prison. Since the federal justice system does not have parole, prison terms will be served virtually in their entirety behind bars. Of course, all sentences will ultimately be determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of a long-term, cross-jurisdictional investigation conducted by local, state, federal, and tribal law enforcement officers dedicated to making our streets and communities safer. They include the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives; the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension; the Carlton County Sheriff's Office; the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration; the FBI-funded Headwaters Safe Trails Task Force; the Mille Lacs Tribal Police Department; the Bemidji Police Department; the Minneapolis Police Department; the Minnesota Department of Corrections; the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs; and the Paul Bunyan Drug Task Force.

These agencies investigated this case with assistance from—in alphabetical order—the Becker County Sheriff's Office, the Beltrami County Sheriff's Office, the Carlton County Attorney's Office, the Cass County Attorney's Office, the Cass County Sheriff's Office, the Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office, the Douglas County Sheriff's Office of Wisconsin, the Duluth Police Department, the Fond du Lac Tribal Police Department, the Fridley Police Department, the Itasca County Sheriff's Department, the Hennepin County Attorney's Office, the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, the Hubbard County Sheriff's Office, the Leech Lake Tribal Police Department, the LCO Reservation Police Department, the Lower Sioux Tribal Police Department, the Mahnomon County Sheriff's Office, the Minnesota State Patrol, the Mille Lacs County Attorney's Office, the Mille Lacs County Sheriff's Office, the New Brighton Police Department, the North Central Drug Task Force, the Prior Lake Police Department, the Red Lake Tribal Police Department, the Redwood County Sheriff's Office, Richfield Police Department, the Sherburne County Sheriff's Office, the St. Paul Police Department, the U.S. Marshals Service, the Minneapolis Violent Offender Task Force, the Washington County Sheriff's Office, and the White Earth Tribal Police Department.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Andrew R. Winter and Steven L. Schleicher.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by a defendant. A defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.