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Two Portland Gang Members Sentenced to Federal Prison for Illegal Firearm Possession

PORTLAND, Ore.—This week, in separate criminal cases, two Portland gang members were sentenced to federal prison for illegally possessing firearms as convicted felons.

On January 4, 2022, Timothy DeWayne Smith, Jr., 28, a member of the Hoover Criminal Gang, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Michael W. Mosman to six months in federal prison and three years' supervised release.

Today, Derek Brandon Conley, 38, a former Crip gang member, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Michael H. Simon to 48 months in federal prison and three years' supervised release.

U.S. v. Smith

According to court documents, as part of an ongoing federal criminal investigation into the racketing activities of the Hoover Criminal Gang, investigators learned of Smith's involvement in various gang activities including sex trafficking and the illegal possession of firearms.

On August 24, 2019, law enforcement responded to a report of someone flashing a gun at a local bar. A police air support unit saw Smith run out of the back of the bar and enter a vehicle. Police followed and stopped the vehicle and located a firearm in its center console. Smith denied flashing or possessing the gun. A forensic laboratory report later confirmed the presence of Smith's DNA on the gun along with the DNA profiles several other people.

Later, on June 10, 2020, Smith was a passenger in a vehicle stopped by Oregon State Police troopers traveling south through Eugene, Oregon. A 9mm semi-automatic pistol with a chambered round was located in the vehicle's center console. The gun was seized and Smith and the vehicle's driver were released. Further investigation revealed that the seized firearm belonged to Smith. He was later arrested without incident.

U.S. v. Conley

In September 2020, probation officers visited Conley's Portland residence where he lived with his fiancé and three children. Conley, who had recently been released from prison after being convicted in April 2017 in Multnomah County Circuit Court for illegally possessing a firearm as a convicted felon, led the officers to his bedroom where bullets and a laser sight rifle attachment were clearly visible. He consented to a search of the room and officers located a rifle Conley

admitted to owning. Two other firearms were found in the residence including one located in an accessible bin in the children's room adjacent to a toy firearm. Conley was arrested on-site without incident.

These cases were investigated by the FBI and ATF with assistance from the Portland Police Bureau, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office, Homeland Security Investigations, and the Oregon State Police. They were prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Oregon.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). PSN is the centerpiece of the Department of Justice's violent crime reduction efforts. PSN is an evidence-based program proven to be effective at reducing violent crime. Through PSN, a broad spectrum of stakeholders work together to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in the community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. As part of this strategy, PSN focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and reentry programs for lasting reductions in crime.

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