



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
District of Kansas

NEWS RELEASE

Eric Melgren, U.S. Attorney

Contact: Jim Cross

(316) 269-6481

Headquarters

1200 Epic Center
301 N. Main
Wichita, Kansas 67202
(316)269-6481
FAX (316)269-6484

Topeka Office

444 Quincy
Topeka, Kansas 66683

Kansas City Office

500 State Avenue
Suite 360
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

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SOUTHEAST KANSAS DRUG TASK FORCE SENDS ANOTHER MEMBER OF CRACK COCAINE RING TO PRISON

KANSAS CITY, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that **James Jackson**, 36, was sentenced to 120 months in federal prison during a hearing Jan. 18, 2005 before U.S. District Judge G. Thomas VanBebber.

Jackson entered a guilty plea July 18, 2004 to distributing more than 5 grams of crack cocaine. Jackson admitted at his plea that from January 1999 through September 2003 he and others engaged in distributing crack cocaine in southeast Kansas and southwest Missouri. He admitted that he was part of an organization that obtained large quantities of cocaine and manufactured crack cocaine and also purchased large quantities of crack cocaine to sell. Jackson admitted that his role in this drug trafficking organization was to distribute varying quantities of crack cocaine to lower level distributors and users.

Melgren said Jackson was charged as part of an 18-month investigation by the Southeast Kansas Drug Task Force into the distribution of crack cocaine in Southeast Kansas.

Melgren commended the excellent work of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, the Parsons Police Department, the Labette County Sheriff's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, the Coffeyville Police Department, the Winfield Police Department, the Joplin, Missouri Police Department, the Labette County Attorney's Office, and the Cowley County Attorney's Office in this investigation and Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Rask in this prosecution.