



## U.S. Department of Justice

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### NEWS RELEASE

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Crustantion McRae, age 31, and Perrin Terrell Brewer, age 30 of Atlanta, Georgia, pleaded guilty today in United States District Court in Norfolk, to conspiracy to obstruct commerce by robbery and use of a firearm in the commission of a crime of violence. In addition, McRae pleaded guilty to money laundering conspiracy. McRae and Brewer each face a maximum prison term of life, a fine of \$250,000, cost of prosecution and full restitution when sentenced by United States District Judge Jerome B. Friedman. McRae will be sentenced on March 14, 2005, and Brewer will be sentenced on April 5, 2005.

The defendants were originally charged in a 14-count indictment returned by the federal grand jury sitting in Newport News, Virginia. They were charged with various offenses, including conspiracy to obstruct commerce by robbery; obstructing and delaying commerce by robbery; use of a firearm in the commission of a crime of violence; unlawful transportation of stolen property; interstate travel in aid of racketeering; money laundering conspiracy; and money laundering.

The indictment alleges that, from July 31, 2001 through May 14, 2003, McRae, Brewer, Tauheed Shakir, Troy Anthony Sherrell, Bryan Kelly, Ulysee Baker and Seneca Jovon Colbert robbed a total of 15 jewelry stores, many of them located in outlet malls, and one pawn shop, along the eastern states of Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee. According to the indictment, Baker sent funds via wire transfers to McRae from Atlanta, Georgia, to the states of Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia, as expense money to facilitate the commission of the robberies.

In addition, the conspirators selected Zales Outlet Jewelry Stores and Friedman's Jewelry Stores to maximize the amount of stolen jewelry obtainable, to minimize the time needed to commit the robberies and to lower the risk of apprehension. The stolen jewelry was transported across state lines to Baker in Atlanta or other locations where the indictment alleges he converted it to currency. The participants entered the stores brandishing handguns and demanded jewelry, cash and the store's video security tapes from the employees. The robbers made quick getaways by forcing the employees to empty the display cases into shopping bags and then fleeing the stores.

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The largest robbery was from a Zales jewelry store in Williamsburg, Virginia, where approximately \$986,573 in jewelry and \$700 in currency were stolen. McRae participated in the Williamsburg robbery, two robberies of Zales jewelry stores in Leesburg, Virginia and ten others in Georgia, Tennessee and South Carolina. Brewer participated in the January 23, 2002 robbery of the Zales in Leesburg, Virginia and three others in Georgia and Tennessee. McRae, Brewer and other participants brandished firearms at the employees of the stores that were robbed, demanding jewelry, cash and the store's video security tapes.

On August 8, 2004, Seneca Colbert was sentenced to 324 months incarceration for his participation in the Williamsburg robbery. In addition, on November 16, 2004, Tauheed Shakir pleaded guilty to the Williamsburg robbery and to the January 5, 2002 Leesburg, Virginia, robbery and to a firearms offense. Shakir is scheduled to be sentenced on February 28, 2005 by District Judge Friedman. On October 19, 2004, Bryan Kelly pleaded guilty to a conspiracy to commit robberies of interstate businesses and is scheduled to be sentenced on January 18, 2005 by Judge Friedman.

The investigation was conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, and numerous other local police and Sheriffs Departments throughout the Southeastern United States. Assistant United States Attorney Howard J. Zlotnick prosecuted the case for the United States.

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