

PRESS RELEASE

Eight Crips Gang Members and Associates Indicted for Racketeering and Numerous Violent Crimes on Long Island

Thursday, April 13, 2023

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of New York

Members and Associates of the Insane Crip Gang from Hempstead Committed Over a Dozen Shootings and Three Murders Between 2016 and 2022

Earlier today, in federal court in Central Islip, a 59-count indictment was unsealed charging eight members and associates of a violent subset of the Crips street gang known as the Insane Crip Gang or "ICG," with various offenses including racketeering, conspiracy to commit murder, attempted murder, and firearms offenses, as well as fraud schemes.

The indictment charges seven defendants with racketeering and conspiracy to commit murder; six defendants are charged with multiple attempted murders, assaults, and related firearms offenses; four defendants are charged in connection with their respective roles in three murders committed in Nassau County between 2016 and 2021. Six defendants were taken into custody this morning in New York and will be arraigned this afternoon before United States Magistrate Judge Arlene R. Lindsay. A seventh defendant, Jonathan Gonzalez, was arrested in North Carolina and will be arraigned in federal court in Winston-Salem this afternoon. One additional defendant remains at large.

Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Anne T. Donnelly, District Attorney, Nassau County District Attorney's Office (NCDA); Michael J. Driscoll, Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field

Office (FBI); and Patrick J. Ryder, Commissioner, Nassau County Police Department (NCPD), announced the arrests and indictment.

"As alleged, the defendants participated in a staggering amount of extreme violence that shattered lives, maimed rivals and endangered countless innocent bystanders on Long Island. As of today, after three brutal murders, over a dozen shootings, hundreds of thousands of dollars of fraud, their chokehold of fear and violence over our community is finally over," stated United States Attorney Peace. "This Office and our law enforcement partners will continue working tirelessly to protect our communities from gang violence and fraud."

Mr. Peace expressed his appreciation to the FBI's Long Island Gang Task Force and the Nassau County Police Department's Homicide Squad and Gang Investigation Squad for their tireless efforts to bring these violent offenders to justice. Mr. Peace also thanked the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the United States Department of Labor, Office of the Inspector General for their efforts in assisting the investigation.

NCPD Donnelly stated: "This Crips faction has wreaked havoc in the Hempstead area for nearly a decade, killing perceived rivals and innocent bystanders alike. In just two years, Akeem Chambers allegedly participated in two homicides and more than a dozen shootings. This gang celebrated its violence on social media, using that same social media as a recruiting tool, and financed its activities by systematically stealing from government benefit programs designed to aid the unemployed and those adversely impacted by COVID. Dismantling gang networks is incredibly difficult work and I thank my staff and our partners at the U.S. Attorney's Office, the FBI and NCPD for the collaborative spirit used during this year-long investigation."

"The defendants allegedly engaged in multiple acts of gang violence, bringing undue fear and harm to the streets of our neighborhoods," stated FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Driscoll. "Gang violence menacing communities is something no one should have to endure; people have the right to feel safe where they live. Today's indictment serves as a reminder that the FBI's Long Island Gang Task Force is persistent in its efforts to keep the neighborhoods of Long Island safe and free of violent crime."

"This multi-agency law enforcement investigation has led to the arrest of numerous Crips gang members for homicides, shootings and racketeering. These defendants have terrorized our communities in Nassau County and now our residents can show a sign of relief that these criminals will no longer be able to inflict harm in our neighborhoods. I would like to congratulate all of the dedicated law enforcement professionals for their

hard work and diligence during the course of this investigation. A job well done by all," stated NCPD Commissioner Ryder.

As alleged in the indictment and court filings, the defendants engaged in a pattern of gang violence which resulted in dozens of gang-related shootings, as well as multiple murders in Nassau County between 2015 and the present. The defendants, as part of their membership and association with the ICG, together with others, committed dozens of violent crimes in and around Hempstead, New York, including shootings, assaults, murders, robberies, and kidnappings.

Akeem Chambers is charged with participating in over a dozen shootings and two homicides between 2020 and 2022, including the August 1, 2020, murder of 28-year-old Thiasia Williams in Hempstead, New York. In that incident, Chambers, along with Rob Pardo and another associate of the ICG learned of a party on Martin Luther King Drive in Hempstead that was going to be attended by members of the rival D Block Bloods. Chambers and the others decided to commit a drive-by shooting of the party. Jonathan Gonzalez was enlisted to be the driver for the shooting. Chambers and the other associate, each armed with a 9mm firearm, planned to shoot the rivals, while Rob Pardo remained in the area to assist their flight from the scene of the crime. As Chambers and the others drove down Martin Luther King Drive shortly after midnight on August 1, 2020, they fired at least eight times at party goers, striking and killing Thiasia Williams, an innocent bystander who was sitting in her car outside the party to pick up a friend. Another innocent female bystander was also struck by gunfire and suffered a non-life-threatening gunshot wound to her leg.

Chambers was also charged with his role in the 2021 robbery and murder of James Diamond in Freeport, New York. In that incident, Chambers, together with others, planned to rob Diamond of a large sum of cash. Chambers and another individual, both armed with firearms, approached the victim and another man, and attempted to rob them at gunpoint. During the course of the robbery, Chambers' coconspirator shot and killed Diamond. Chambers and several accomplices were indicted and arrested for this murder by Nassau County authorities.

Notably, Jalen Rogers, who is charged with over a half-dozen violent crimes ranging from attempted murder and assault to attempted kidnapping, committed at least three of those violent crimes while he was wearing a court-ordered GPS ankle monitor imposed as a condition of supervision. In each of those shootings, records for Rogers' ankle monitor place him at the scene of the crime at the time of the shootings.

Jonathan Vazquez is charged with the November 19, 2016 murder of 19 year-old Joecephus Vanable in Hempstead, New York. Vanable, an individual who was

repeatedly targeted by the ICG in Hempstead, was shot and killed on a Hempstead street by Vazquez. In the wake of Vazquez's murder, members and associates of the ICG took to social media to brag about the killing. In addition, the gang boasted about the killing in rap videos and graffiti around Hempstead. In addition to violence directed at rivals, Vazquez is also charged with attempted murder for opening fire on two Nassau County Police Officers who were attempting to conduct a stop of his vehicle. Vazquez is also charged with the gunpoint robbery of a woman in Levittown, New York and several other gang-related shootings.

To finance their criminal conduct and enrich themselves, the defendants and other ICG members and associates engaged in a wide array of fraud schemes, including defrauding state unemployment systems, the federal Covid-19 Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), various forms of identity theft and bank fraud. The frauds perpetrated by ICG members and associates netted the gang's members and associates hundreds of thousands of dollars since early 2020. For example, the ICG stole approximately \$200,000 from the State of California by submitting fraudulent unemployment benefits applications. In addition to their fraud schemes, the defendants regularly purchased, maintained and sold a wide array of firearms. The investigation linked a total of 26 guns to the defendants and their associates; 14 of the 26 guns were linked to multiple shootings committed by the defendants or other ICG members.

Law enforcement executed multiple search warrants this morning and recovered a 9mm, fully-loaded semiautomatic pistol and a .45 caliber semiautomatic pistol with an extended magazine and additional ammunition.

The charges in the indictment are allegations, and the defendants are presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty. If convicted, Chambers, Dindyal, Gonzalez, Lesly Pardo, Rogers, and Vazquez face up to a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. Pardo faces up to 20 years' imprisonment.

This case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a program bringing together all levels of law enforcement and the communities they serve to reduce violent crime and make our neighborhoods safer for everyone. The Department of Justice reinvigorated PSN in 2017 as part of its renewed focus on targeting violent criminals, directing all U.S. Attorneys' Offices to work in partnership with federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement and the local community to develop effective, locally based strategies to reduce violent crime.

The government's case is being handled by the Office's Long Island Criminal Division. Assistant United States Attorneys Nicole Boeckmann, Michael Maffei and

Samantha Alessi are in charge of the prosecution, with the assistance of Paralegal Specialist Kerry Ucci and Automated Litigation Specialist Michael Compitello.

This prosecution is the product of investigations led by the FBI's Long Island Gang Task Force, which is comprised of agents and officers of the FBI, Suffolk County Police Department, NCPD, Nassau County Sheriff's Department, Suffolk County Probation Office, Suffolk County Sheriff's Office, New York State Police, Hempstead Police Department, Rockville Centre Police Department, and the NCDA.

The Defendants:

Akeem Chambers, also known as "Luca"
Age: 21
Uniondale, New York

JAHZIAH DINDYAL, also known as "JZ" and "Nine"
Age: 19
Hempstead, New York

Jonathan Gonzalez, also known as "Grizz"
Age: 23
Greensboro, North Carolina

LESLY PARDO, also known as "Chop" and "Chopavelli"
Age: 26
Mount Sinai, New York

ROB PARDO, also known as "Static"
Age: 25
Mount Sinai, New York

JALEN ROGERS, also known as "Drama" and "Moonie"
Age: 20
Hempstead, New York

JONATHAN VAZQUEZ, also known as "Chulo" and "Clutch"
Age: 21
Hempstead, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 23-CR-157 (JMA)

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