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GUNS RESULT IN LENGTHY PRISON TERM FOR GRAND RAPIDS DRUG DEALER

GRAND RAPIDS, Michigan – Cedric Devon Rice, 27, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, was sentenced to 106 months in prison for the commission of federal firearms offenses relating to drug trafficking, U.S. Attorney Charles R. Gross announced today. Rice received a 46-month sentence for being a felon in possession of firearms and for receiving firearms while under felony indictment, and he received a 60-month consecutive sentence for possessing firearms in furtherance of drug trafficking. As a result, Rice will spend nearly the next nine years in prison.

On May 10, 2007, a federal grand jury returned a five-count indictment, charging Rice with (1) possession with intent to distribute marijuana; (2) being a felon in possession of two firearms; (3) possession of firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime; (4) being a felon in possession of three firearms (different than those in Count 2); and (5) receipt of three firearms while under felony indictment. The first three charges related to the execution of a search warrant on January 17, 2007, at the residence where Rice was living, during which the Grand Rapids Police Department Vice Unit recovered marijuana, drug trafficking paraphernalia, cash, a loaded 12-gauge shotgun with a pistol grip, a loaded .38 caliber revolver, and assorted

ammunition. Rice attempted to flee as the search warrant was being executed by jumping from a second-story balcony. He was arrested and charged in Kent County with being a felon in possession of firearms and delivery/manufacture of marijuana. He was released on bond.

On March 22, 2007, while he was awaiting disposition of his state charges, GRPD executed a second search warrant at Rice's residence and found more guns: a Smith & Wesson .357 caliber revolver, a Taurus .44 caliber revolver, and a Norinco Model MAK-90 7.62 x 39mm semiautomatic rifle. The Norinco semiautomatic rifle is commonly referred to as an "AK-47 assault-type" rifle, which is manufactured in China. Rice later admitted that he purchased all three firearms after being released on bond for the state charges. The case then went into the federal system, and on July 25, 2007, Rice pleaded guilty to Counts 2, 3 and 5 of the indictment in U.S. District Court in Grand Rapids.

The investigation and prosecution of this case was a coordinated effort of the Grand Rapids Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). The case was prosecuted under the Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative, which is designed to reduce violent crime by targeting violent felons for federal prosecution for firearms violations, which carry stiff penalties.

Rice has been held in custody since being charged federally, and he was remanded to the custody of the United States Marshal to serve his sentence.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Phillip J. Green.

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