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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DRUG RING-LEADER CONVICTED

Contrell Smith, a 24-year-old Redford man, was found guilty today by a federal jury in Port Huron on multiple drug trafficking charges. Smith was convicted of conducting a Continuing Criminal Enterprise, Conspiracy to Distribute Cocaine and Crack Cocaine, four counts of Possession with Intent to Distribute Cocaine and Crack Cocaine and four counts of Unlawful Use of a Telephone, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

The jury deliberated for less than three hours before returning the verdict, concluding a less than two-week trial before United States District Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff.

The evidence presented at trial showed that Smith was the ring-leader of a cocaine distribution organization known as the "Joy Boys." From October 2002, through December 7, 2003, self-described "Joy Boys," sold crack and powder cocaine to narcotics customers, who would call "customer service" cellular telephone numbers. A member of the Joy Boys organization would direct the customer to meet him, or another Joy Boy, at a location, typically on a residential side street, usually located on the far west side of Detroit, in Redford Township, Dearborn or Allen Park, Michigan. The customer would be told to wait at the meet spot until a drug delivery car arrived. When the delivery car arrived, the Joy Boys would sell crack cocaine or powder cocaine to the customers. In essence, the Joy Boys organization operated a mobile crack house, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The Joy Boys used supply locations to package the narcotics, collect narcotics proceeds, for record keeping relating to the narcotics transactions, and for the storage of firearms used for the protection of the organization. Contrell Smith obtained substantial income and resources from the operation of this drug ring.

"Dismantling armed drug gangs like the so-called 'Joy Boys' is a priority of our office; I salute the excellent efforts of the federal and local investigative team that took down this drug organization and made our streets safer," United States Attorney Murphy said.

"I believe that the drop in gun crime in the City of Detroit last year is a direct reflection of ATF's work with our law enforcement partners working narcotics investigation. We know that guns and drugs go hand and hand and can escalate violent crime rates. Through aggressive enforcement of the gun laws we can identify and combat violent drug gangs from ruling our streets," said Valerie J. Goddard, Special Agent in Charge, Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

Murphy commended the work of the agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Drug Enforcement Administration, with the assistance of the Wayne County Sheriff's Department, the Detroit Police Department and the Westland Police Department in the investigation.

A sentencing date has been set for April 27, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. in Port Huron. Smith faces a mandatory minimum of 20 years and a maximum of life imprisonment. Smith was remanded into the custody of the United States Marshal's Service.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Wayne F. Pratt and Michael J. Riordan.