Department of Justice

United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill
Middle District of Florida

FEDERAL JURY FINDS JACKSONVILLE ARMED CAREER CRIMINAL GUILTY OF POSSESSING A FIREARM

Jacksonville, FL- U.S. Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces that a federal jury last week found Willie Lee Daniels (39, Jacksonville) guilty of being a felon in possession of a firearm. Because of his prior criminal history, Daniels is classified as an Armed Career Criminal, and faces a mandatory minimum penalty of 15 years, up to a maximum penalty of life in federal prison. Daniels was indicted on July 15, 2010.

According to testimony and evidence presented at trial, in October 2009, Daniels and his girlfriend got into a verbal argument inside of their apartment. The argument eventually moved outside. Daniels' girlfriend called out for help, yelling that Daniels had a gun. One of the neighbors called 911. Officers from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office responded, and observed Daniels walking with his girlfriend in the parking lot. After making eye contact with one of the officers, Daniels ran behind an annex building and threw the gun over a nearby fence. Daniels was detained by the officers, and the gun was subsequently recovered.

This case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Malisa Chokshi and Frank Talbot.

It is another case prosecuted as a part of the Department of Justice's "Project Safe Neighborhoods" program - a nationwide, gun-violence reduction strategy led by ATF. United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill, along with Julie Torres, ATF Special Agent in Charge, are coordinating the Project Safe Neighborhoods effort here in the Middle District of Florida in cooperation with federal, state, and local law enforcement officials.

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