

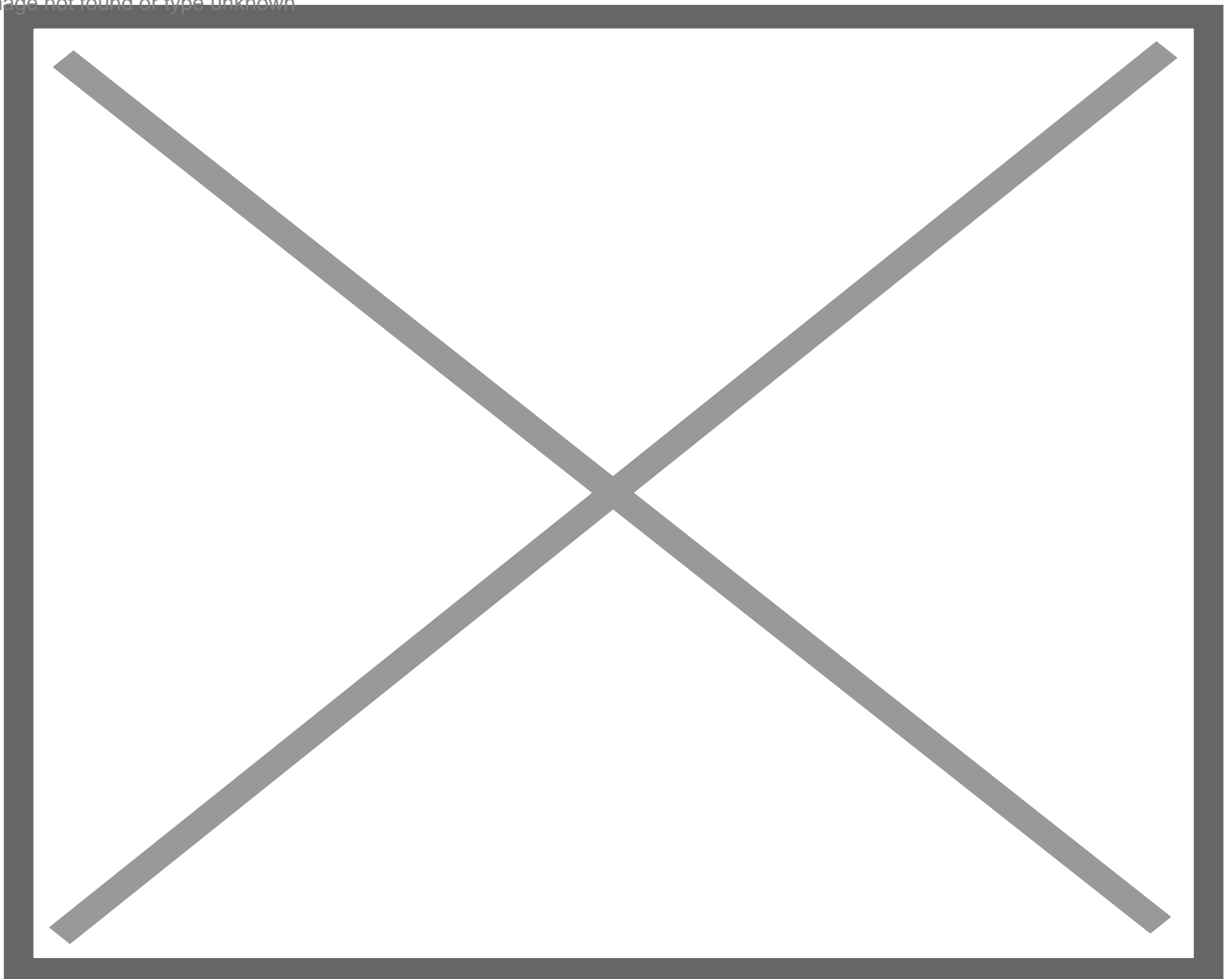
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Multiple Murders; \$110,804 Robbery; Kidnapping of Bank Teller and Her Daughters: 3 Sentenced in Paul Girard's Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization

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Scene of the September 4, 2015 murder of Jermaine “Bird” Williams outside the St. George Christian Academy Head Start on St. Croix. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

ST. CROIX — United States Attorney Delia L. Smith announced today that Shaquielle Correa, 27, James Cruz, 28, and Shermyra Gumbs, 27, all of St. Croix, were sentenced by District Court Judge Timothy J. Savage for their roles in a Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) led by Paul Girard from his prison cell.

In handing down the sentences, Judge Savage characterized the Girard Enterprise as a lawless, reckless, cruel and merciless gang.

“The Paul Girard Criminal Enterprise was a vicious and lawless gang that terrorized and victimized the people of the Virgin Islands for years,” stated United States Attorney Delia Smith. “The tremendous work of the Federal Bureau of Investigations, the Virgin Islands Police Department, and attorneys from my office and the U.S. Department of Justice Criminal Division delivered the ultimate reward to the people of our Territory – just and lengthy sentences of imprisonment to those involved.”

"First, I want to thank the United States Attorney's Office for the District of the Virgin Islands for their great work and invaluable support in this investigation. I also want to highlight the work of the Virgin Islands Police Department, Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Postal Service, Homeland Security Investigations, the Virgin Islands Marshal Service and the U.S. Office of Probation. Their support was instrumental to the dismantlement of this violent criminal enterprise. Today, the people of the Virgin Islands can rest a little easier, but there is more work to be done," said FBI Special Agent in Charge Joseph Gonzalez who oversees FBI operations in the Virgin Islands.

According to court documents, on July 17, 2014, Shaquielle Correa and two other members of the Girard Enterprise, all wearing black ski masks and two wielding firearms, entered the cash cage area of the Divi Racino and demanded money. Correa and his coconspirators fled the scene with approximately \$110,804.00, which they later divided among themselves and other members of Girard's Enterprise, including an incarcerated Girard who helped plan the robbery. Several days later, Correa's share of the robbery proceeds went missing and he believe Eddie Harriette, the brother of his girlfriend, had stolen his money to buy a new car. On July 21, 2014, Correa and other enterprise members approach Harriette after he stopped at a gas station near the St. Croix Agricultural Fairgrounds in his new car.

Thereafter, Correa fired several shots into Harriette's vehicle killing him and injuring two of his passengers. Correa fled on foot and was later picked up by members of Girard's Enterprise. Approximately ten days after Harriette's murder, Virgin Islands Police Officers stopped Correa and co-defendant Shaquan Prentice in a vehicle that contained a 7.62 caliber AK-47-style Romania rifle and two high-capacity magazines, each containing 30 rounds of ammunition. The rifle's serial number was obliterated. Correa entered a plea agreement where he admitted committing the armed robbery of the Divi Racino. Correa also admitted to murdering Harriette and to unlawfully possessing an AK-47 firearm, and possession with intent to distribute marijuana. He was sentenced to 272 months which was adjusted to 211 months by Judge Savage to account for time already served by Correa on the armed robbery conviction.

Trial testimony further revealed that on December 21, 2014, enterprise member James Cruz and three other individuals kidnapped a bank employee. At the direction of Girard and a now deceased enterprise member, Cruz and his co-conspirators accosted the banker at gunpoint around midnight as she walked from her car to her front door. They forced the banker into her home where they gathered her two daughters, one of whom was pregnant, and her son and forced them to remain in the living room. Girard, who participated by cellphone from his prison cell, directed Cruz to enter the home to force the banker to take the enterprise members to her bank where she would give them access to the bank's vault. After several hours of the banker explaining why their plan would not work, Cruz and the other assailants finally gave up and fled the scene. For his role, Cruz was sentenced to 144 months of imprisonment after pleading guilty to the kidnapping. As part of his plea agreement, Cruz further admitted that on May 26, 2014, he attempted to commit a carjacking

with other enterprise members. During the attempted carjacking, enterprise member Lenn Williams shot at the driver who defended himself by returning fire with his licensed firearm. Williams was hit with the return fire and declared dead upon arrival at the Juan Luis Hospital.

Enterprise member Shermyra Gumbs was also sentenced to 100 months of imprisonment for her role in the [September 4, 2015, murder of Jermaine “Bird” Williams](#). In her plea agreement, Gumbs admitted that she served as a lookout while enterprise members, including Robert Brown, shot Williams multiple times as he sat in his vehicle outside the St. George Christian Academy Head Start in St. Croix. As the murder was being committed, Gumbs was reporting the events by cellphone to an incarcerated Girard who ordered the murder. After Williams’ murder, Gumbs and another enterprise member returned the vehicle used in the homicide to an enterprise member who had rented the vehicle.

“These defendants terrorized the U.S. Virgin Islands through violence and theft,” said Assistant Attorney General Kenneth A. Polite Jr. of the Justice Department’s Criminal Division. “These sentences demonstrate that the Department of Justice and our law enforcement partners are committed to combating the threat of gang violence.”

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigations and the Virgin Islands Police Department and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Meredith Edwards and Criminal Division Trial Attorneys Christopher Taylor, Organized Crime and Gang Section, and Marie Zisa, Human Rights and Special Prosecutions Section.

The investigation is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) investigation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level drug traffickers, money launderers, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations that threaten the United States by using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach that leverages the strengths of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies against criminal networks.