

Law Enforcement Awards

U.S. Attorney's Office – Southern District of Ohio

David DeVillers
Kevin Kelley
Acquanette Lindsay
Brian Martinez
Kim Robinson
Emily Sroka
Barbara Vanarsdall
Christy Werner
Mary Beth Young

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

James Bajus

Columbus Division of Police

Mitch Seckman

Drug Enforcement Administration

Keith Leighton

FBI

Erick Lauber

Franklin County Prosecutor's Office

James Lowe

Distinguished Law Enforcement Group Achievement Award

Short North Posse Investigation and Prosecution Team U.S. Attorney's Office — Southern District of Ohio

A team of investigators and attorneys worked together to take down the Short North Posse, a violent gang that terrorized a Columbus neighborhood for more than 25 years. Their efforts led to one of the largest federal racketeering and murder indictments in the state's history.

The investigation, "Get Shorty," began in 2012 as a Department of Justice Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force program. The U.S. Attorney's Office brought together dozens of agents, investigators, and analysts from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Columbus Division of Police; Drug Enforcement Administration; and FBI to build a case against the gang.

The indictments identified 112 overt acts – including 18 murders and assorted other violent crimes and drug trafficking offenses – committed by the gang. In two trials, 38 defendants were convicted of federal charges resulting in prison sentences, including five defendants receiving mandatory life sentences. The prosecution called 115 witnesses and introduced hundreds of crime scene photographs, seized weapons, and recorded jail calls. In the aftermath, appellate attorneys have taken the lead in 19 related appeals cases.

The success of the team serves as a template for how agencies can systematically build federal racketeering and murder cases against criminal enterprises. The construction of the investigative team and the embedding of prosecutors and case agents in an investigative "war room" for the duration of the investigation – serves as a model for the type of cooperation necessary to coordinate an extensive investigation and to combat violent criminal organizations.