



PRESS RELEASE

Brazos County Jury Sentences Gang Member to 90 Years in Prison for Robbery

April 16, 2015

Bryan, TX – A Brazos County jury sentenced Erric Portis to 90 years in prison today after convicting him of two counts of Aggravated Robbery stemming from a 2013 robbery of Commerce National Bank in Bryan.

During the trial, prosecutors were able to prove that Portis and another man, Bryan Champion of Houston, entered Commerce National Bank on July 30, 2013. Champion pointed a gun at tellers while Portis jumped over the counter and retrieved the money.

The car used in the robbery had been stolen at gunpoint from a Bryan resident shortly before the bank robbery.

Bryan Police detectives were able to use phone records to show that Portis and Champion were together and near the bank at the time of the robbery. Prosecutors also called a witness who saw Portis with the stolen car minutes after the carjacking.

During the punishment phase of the trial, prosecutors also showed that on August 16, 2013, Portis participated in a second bank robbery, this time at the Bank and Trust on Highway 21 in Bryan. Detectives were again able to use phone records to link Portis to that robbery, even though Portis claimed he was in Houston at the time.

In addition, prosecutors called several officers to testify about having previously dealt with Portis on his prior crimes. Prosecutors showed that Portis had been sent to prison in 2006 for Possession of Cocaine, and again in 2011 for a robbery he committed in Robertson County. Portis also has multiple prior convictions for Evading Arrest with a Vehicle, Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle, giving false information to police, as well as a conviction for Delivery of a Simulated





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Controlled Substance.

Prosecutors presented evidence that Portis is a member of the “Bloods” criminal street gang. In addition, more than 10 members of Brazos County’s jail staff were called to talk about Portis’ behavior in jail while awaiting trial. Portis engaged in multiple fights in the jail as well as verbal and sexual harassment of jail employees. Prior to the final day of trial, Portis also told a jailer that he was going to have an outburst upon his sentencing and that he would have to be “tased” in order to get control of him.

In 2014, Portis’ co-defendant, Bryan Champion, was tried and sentenced to 60 years in prison by a jury.

The case was investigated by Detectives from the Bryan Police Department. The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Ryan Calvert and Philip McLemore.

“Violence, and gang-violence in particular, has no place in our community. When a person shows that he is unwilling to change, then the only option is to prevent him from victimizing any more people.” - Ryan Calvert & Philip McLemore, Assistant District Attorneys

