



## THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

### Office of the Commissioner

AAF Justice Complex, 5400 Veterans Drive St. Thomas, 00802 \* Administrative services building 45 Mars Hill, Frederiksted St. Croix, 00840 \* (340) 774-2211(St. Thomas) ~ (340) 778-2211 (St. Croix)

VIPD Release-082622-225

#### For Immediate Media Distribution

August 26, 2022

### **CIB Arrest One Shooter; Second Shooter Wanted in the Castle Coakley Fatal Shootings of Two 17-Year-Old Minors**

**Christiansted, St. Croix**– On August 26,2022, at 6:15 a.m., members of the Criminal Investigation Bureau and the Special Operations Bureau traveled to #136 Old Castle Coakley, Christiansted and executed both a search and arrest warrant. The suspect Ozanie I. Cornelius, 27-years-old, was arrested without incident and the residence was searched. Also executed was a search warrant on the address of the second suspect of this investigation, 25-year-old Ricardo Richards, and an arrest warrant for his arrest has been obtained. Mr. Richards whereabouts is unknown currently, and we are asking for the community’s assistance in locating him.

Chief Detective, Lt. Joseph, stated that “This case stems from the January 17, 2022, murders of Odonnie Heywood and Jah’ny Ledesma both 17-years-old, who were shot multiple times while driving through Old Castle Coakley. They were stopped and approached by Cornelius and Richards who were both heavily armed, Cornelius with a handgun and Richards with a high-powered rifle.”

Chief Detective, Lt Joseph further stated “There were also similarly armed individuals on top of the two-story building in the area, and they all opened fire on the vehicle containing two minors and the adult driver. We collected over two hundred spent casings from the crime scene and the majority was from a high-powered rifle. Mr. Richards also sought medical attention for a gunshot wound that night, however claimed that he was shot at Thomas’s Bakery in Old Castle Coakley. The minors died instantly, and the adult survived from the multiple gunshot wounds that he sustained.

The warrant was signed by the Honorable Magistrate Earnest Morris of the Virgin Islands, Superior Court.

Cornelius was charged for Murder in the 1st degree, Attempted Murder 1st, Assault 1st, Carrying or using a dangerous weapon during the commission of a crime of violence, Unauthorized Possession of a firearm.

Mr. Cornelius was unable to post a \$2.5 million dollar bail and was transported to the John Bell Correctional Facility pending his advised of right hearing on Monday, August 29,2022.

Anyone with information about these Homicides, please call the CIB Tip-line 340 778 4850, 340 7126092, Crime stoppers VI 1800 222 TIPS or 911.

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