

1/20/1996 – CR #224270 A redacted complainant alleged that on January 20, 1996, Young and other officers entered an apartment without permission or a warrant, stole \$2,297.00, and “took” a witness to an apartment and “stated that drugs were found in that apartment.”

1/28/1997 – CR #234162 Jamaime Sudor alleged that on January 28, 1997, Young beat and planted drugs on him.

Spring 1999 – CR #254205 In separate incidents in May and June 1999, Watts stole \$250 and planted drugs on a redacted complainant, leading to false arrests on each occasion.

12/1/1999 – CR #259917 A redacted complainant alleged that on December 21, 1999, Mohammed and another officer confiscated the complainant’s wallet, failing to either inventory or return it.

2000 – Watt’s systemic corruption noted by CPD Officer Spaargaren and noted by FBI (see 6/9/2008 and 2/27/2015)

3/7/2000 – CR #260658 The redacted complainant alleged that on March 7, 2000, Watts and another officer verbally abused him, and stole—without inventorying—\$250 and the complainant’s coat.

June 2000 – CR #263095 A redacted complainant alleged that in June 2000 Watts used excessive force during an improper arrest, including grabbing the complainant by his genitals and hanging him upside down over a bannister while threatening to drop him.

6/27/2000 – CR #263459 On June 27, 2000, Jones planted drugs on the redacted complainant and initiated false charges.

1/15/2001 – CR #268523 A redacted complainant alleged that on January 15, 2001, Jones and other officers entered their residence without permission or a warrant, asked “Where are you hiding the drugs?” and severely beat the occupants in the apartment when they denied having any. One of the victims required hospitalization.

9/16/2001 – CR #274930 A redacted complainant alleged that on September 16, 2001, Jones and other officers pointed a gun at his head and fabricated a gun charge against him.

1/4/2003 – Watts and Jones pulled over Petitioner Leonard Gipson and arrested him (after unsuccessfully soliciting a bribe prior to 1/4/2003). Gipson filed complaints with OPS.

1/14/2003 – CR #287011 A redacted complainant alleged that on January 14, 2003, Watts and Officer Calvin Ridgell, Jr. assaulted the complainant, planted heroin on him, and falsified drug delivery charges against him. Young was a witness for the accused officers.

1/22/2003 – CR #279178 and #259253 On January 22, 2003, [Police Agent](#) Daria Ringo contacted the [Office of Professional Standards](#) to alert them that [FBI](#) Special Agent Kenneth Samuels told her that Jones was known to steal money from arrestees and stole \$30 from a female heroin dealer in or around March 2002.

2/5/2003 – Watts, Jones, and others falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Henry Thomas.

5/31/2003 – Watts and Mohammed falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Lee Rainey.

5/8/2003 – Watts again falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Gipson. Gipson filed complaints with OPS.

1/14/2003 – Petitioner Gipson testified at a hearing on a Motion to Suppress Evidence.

2004 – Watts under investigation by CPD-IAD (see 12/4/2014).

1/1/2004 – CR #294821 [Chicago Police](#) Sgt. James Heneghan initiated a complaint on January 1, 2004 after two Chicago police officers reported that 14 small bags of crack cocaine were left in a squad car by Bolton and Gonzalez during their previous shift. Bolton and Gonzalez had no explanation and claimed that “no citizens were placed inside the vehicle during their tour of duty.”

4/23/2004 – Watt’s team falsely arrested and framed Petitioners Shaun James and Taurus Smith. 17-year-old Smith made an OPS complaint with his mother.

5/31/2004 – CR #298336 A redacted complainant alleged that on May 31, 2004, Jones and Jerome Summers planted drugs on him, falsely arrested him for the drugs, and failed to inventory \$600 they took from him.

6/28/2004 – Watts’ team falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Jamar Lewis.

8/23/2004 – CR #300175 A redacted complainant alleged that on August 23, 2004, Watts grabbed her by the neck, choked her, and verbally abused her.

9/24/2004 – FBI report documenting an interview three days prior with an individual whose name is redacted, notes that “Watts gets IBW [Ida B. Wells] drug dealers to pay him to work’ (sell drugs) in the housing project. If the payments are made to Watts, he will in turn allow the drug dealers to continue to sell drugs.” The same report described Mohammed as a co-conspirator in this scheme, and noted that “Watts receives weekly payments form drug dealers . . . typically in the amount of \$5,000.”

12/27/2004 – FBI report noted that the FBI’s Watts-targeted investigation involved CPD-IAD as well, and had already “resulted in the successful recovery of firearms.” The report documented statements from an individual who said Watts “solicited bribe payments from him” in exchange for allowing “his drug trafficking activity in the Ida B. Wells housing project.”

10/10/2004 – CR #301221 A redacted complainant alleged that on October 10, 2004, Watts, Summers, and another officer beat the complainant for 20 minutes during a drug arrest. The complainant had blood in his urine as a result of the beating.

10/15/2004 – FBI report indicates Watts was involved in systematic extortion, bribery, and drug trafficking.

10/16/2004 – Watts, Jones and Lewis falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Lee Rainey a second time, along with Petitioner Thomas Jefferson. Rainey filed a complaint with OPS, and Watts was initially assigned to investigate that complaint.

2/10/2005 – CR #303646 On February 10, 2005, Watts and Jones beat the redacted complainant and threatened him with a gun.

4/7/2005 – ATF 9-page report on interview with Wilbert Moore (“Big Shorty”) who details extensive criminal activity of Watts. 8 months later, Moore was shot and killed. Watts plead the fifth when asked if he killed, solicited to kill, participated in a conspiracy to kill, or had knowledge of a plan to kill Wilbert Moore.

5/19/2005 – CR #305723 On May 19, 2005, Mohammed kicked the redacted complainant in the back and chest.

5/26/2005 – CR #305849 Several redacted complainants allege that on May 26, 2005, Watts conducted an unlawful search, swore at the complainants and told them that “we don’t need no motherfucking search warrant and fuck OPS they ain’t going to do shit,” physically assaulted the complainants, and falsely arrested them. Regarding OPS, the complainants alleged that Watts specifically told them, “Don’t you see I keep beating my cases?” During the incident, Watts stole drugs from someone else and planted them on a complainant. Gonzalez, Bolton, and Smith all were witnesses for Watts.

10/12/2005 – CR #309085 On October 12, 2005, Watts and Officer Raymond Pivnicki got in a physical altercation at the Ida B. Wells housing complex and Watts was accused of interfering with a police investigation. Leano, Nichols, Smith, Jones, and Young were all present during this altercation, and all gave statements in support of Watts. Both Watts and Pivnicki were suspended for three days.

2006 – FBI investigation suspended when CCSAO considered parallel State prosecution

1/20/2006 – FBI report indicates Watts was involved in systematic extortion, bribery, and drug trafficking

1/16/2006 – Watts and Jones stole from, arrested, and framed Petitioner Allen Jackson. Witnesses testified on behalf of Jackson at a hearing for a Motion to quash the arrest.

2/10/2006 – FBI report indicates Watts was involved in systematic extortion, bribery, and drug trafficking

2/19/2006 – CR #311300 On February 19, 2006, Watts, Mohammed and another officer beat and falsely arrested the redacted complainants. One of the complainants was hospitalized due to swelling and soreness in the chest, ribs, and eye, and a fracture at the base of the left hand.

3/31/2006 – CR #312047 A redacted complainant alleged that on March 31, 2006 she was stopped and harassed by Watts and Jones in retaliation for testifying against Jones in court.

4/4/2006 – Watts’ team falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Christopher Scott (after they previously arrested him once and unsuccessfully falsely charged him with selling drugs).

4/24/2006 – Petitioner Lionel White, Jr.’s father is falsely arrested and framed by Watts’ team and subsequently filed an OPS complaint on 6/12/2006. (White, Sr. was exonerated in 2016.)

5/19/2006 – CR A redacted citizen filed a complaint against Mohammed, Watts, Jones, Smith, and Kenny Young. The complainant alleged that on May 19, 2006, Jones and others stopped him, arrested and searched him without justification, robbed him of \$20, and then “put 16 bags of drugs on him and a lady.”

6/4/2006 – Watts, Mohammed, Smith, Jones, Nichols and others falsely arrested and framed disabled 17-year-old Petitioner Jamell Sanders.

7/23/2006 – Watts’ team falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Lionel White, Jr.

8/17/2006 – CR A redacted complainant alleged that on August 17, 2006, Mohammed, Watts, and Jones were with two other officers that illegally entered a residence at 4246 S. Michigan Avenue and beat, punched, and kicked the complainant. The officers ransacked the residence and caused damage to property and repeatedly called the complainant “motherfucker” and “nigger.” Hospital records the day after the incident show the complainant’s elbow in a sling and abrasions on his body, and photographs of the premises show the residence in disarray and various items damaged and broken.

2007 – FBI works with undercover CPD agents to investigate Watts (See 11/1/2012).

1/4/2007 – CR #1002468 A redacted complainant sued Young and other police officers b ased upon falsely arresting the complainant and using excessive force on January 4, 2007.

1/7/2007 – Watts and his team falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Marcus Gibbs (after previously arresting and taking money from him on past occasions).

1/18/2007 – FBI report on meeting with CPD whistleblowers Shannon Spalding and Echevarria that calls Watts “a corrupt Police Officer” and states “that Watts, along with other members of his team, routinely used their positions as Police Officers to extort individuals at Ida B. Wells.”

1/21/2007 – CR #1004698 After a series of threats in the months prior, a redacted complainant alleged that on January 21, 2007, Watts and Smith falsely arrested complainant because he could not provide them with information as to where drugs and guns could be located.

3/28/2007 – Watts’ team falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Frank Saunders.

5/14/2007 – Watts, Smith, and Jones falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Phillip Thomas.

5/16/2007 – CR A redacted complainant alleged that on May 16, 2007, Officers Mohammed, Watts, and Lamonica Lewis entered her residence without permission or a warrant, pushed her without justification, handcuffed her and everyone else in the apartment, and threatened to plant drugs on her cousin. The same complaint notes that the complainant’s husband alleges that these same officers shot at him and beat him during as part of the same series of events.

5/18/2007 – CR A redacted complainant alleges that on May 18, 2007, Nichols, Leano, Mohammed, Smith, and Jones stole \$916 from him, beat him while attempting to coerce him to admit to a crime, and demanded money and information.

7/4/2007 – CR #1014553 The Independent Police Review Authority initiated a complaint upon learning that a civil suit was filed against Mohammed, Gonzalez, Bolton, and another officer. The claim alleged that on July 4, 2007, the accused officers beat and falsely arrested the redacted complainant.

8/28/2007 – Watts unsuccessfully solicited another bribe from Petition Gipson, and falsely arrested and framed Gipson a third time.

8/29/2007 – CR #1008820 A redacted complainant alleged that on August 29, 2007, Watts and Jones severely beat multiple people while questioning them about narcotics. Multiple people were falsely arrested for trespassing. Nichols, Smith, and Leano were all present during the incident and claimed Jones used appropriate force to defend himself.

10/26/2007 – FBI report described the targets of the investigation as “Ronald Watts, Kallatt Mohammed and others yet unknown,” and stated that they “are accused of engaging in the systematic extortion of money from drug dealers in the Ida B. Wells Housing Project in exchange for police protection.”

11/3/2007 – CR #1028854 A redacted complainant, believed to be Sandra Cartwright, alleged that on November 3, 2007, Watts, Jones, Nichols, and Lewis planted drugs on Cartwright. After almost a year-and-a-half in prison, Cartwright was acquitted. During a deposition prior to her civil rights trial, Mister Lucky Pearson testified that he, too, had been framed by these officers

1/7/08 – Petitioner Phillip Thomas represented himself at his two-day jury trial and explicitly accused Jones, Smith, and Watts of framing him.

1/21/2008 – FBI report described “bribe payments . . . made to Mohammed on a biweekly basis in exchange for Mohammed and Watts’ protection.”

4/12/2008 – CR #1015698 A redacted complainant alleged that on April 12, 2008, upon hearing knocking at the door of his home, the complainant opened the door and was immediately beaten by officers that included Watts, Jones, Smith, and others. While the officers were not in the apartment, they conducted illegal searches and arrested individuals for drugs they did not have.

4/19/2008 – CR #1051941 A redacted complainant alleges that Watts kicked down her door and illegally searched her, the apartment, and its occupants on April 19, 2008.

5/31/2008 – CR On May 31, 2008, Officers Nichols, Watts, and Jones, beat the redacted complainant, threatened to plant drugs on her, and stole \$340. A second complainant or witness was also beaten, and hospital records corroborated the allegation.

6/9/2008 – FBI report notes that Sergeant Watts “has been responsible for patrolling and investigating illegal activity within the Ida B. Wells Housing Complex . . . for approximately ten (10) years.” It noted that Watts “supervises nine (9 to ten (10) officers at any given time, including Kallatt Mohammed.” The same report explained “Watts regularly extorted payments from drug dealers in exchange for allowing the drug trade to continue at the Watts complex.”

9/15/2008 – Watts, Mohammed, and Nichols falsely arrested and framed Petitioner Andre McNairy (after Nichols and Gonzalez previously arrested him a few weeks before).

11/21/2008 – CR Anthony McDaniels alleged that on November 21, 2008, Mohammed and Nichols planted a gun on him, stole over \$600 from him, and initiated false charges against him. McDaniels further alleged that Nichols, Leano, and Mohammed then falsely testified against him.

5/26/1009 – CR A redacted complainant alleged that on May 6, 2009, Officer Mohammed stole \$3,400 from him during an arrest.

8/8/2009 – CR #1029004 A redacted complainant alleged that on August 8, 2009, Leano rode over his head with an ATV during the Bud Billiken Day Parade. Gonzalez gave a statement in support of Leano.

8/26/2009 – CR #1029569 A redacted complainant alleged that on August 26, 2009, Watts and other officers verbally and physically assaulted him. Watts did not deny that he struck the complainant, claiming he did so to protect a child. Jones and Mohammad were witnesses in support of Watts.

9/11/2009 – CR #1030009 On September 11, 2009, Watts, Jones, and another officer illegally entered the redacted complainant’s home, beat him, and searched the home while Watts stated, “Where is the stuff or I’m going to whip your ass.” A witness supported the complainant’s account, but other officers, including Smith, Leano, and Mohammed, backed Watts and Jones.

10/13/2009 - CR #1030958 A redacted complainant alleged that on October 13, 2009, Watts verbally abused her during an arrest. Smith and Jones, who were with Watts during the arrest, denied the allegation.

10/15/2009 – CR A redacted complainant (whose case, per the OPS report, supposedly later became 92CR20361(02)) alleged that on October 15, 2009, Nichols, Mohammed, Leano, Watts, Jones, Smith Jr., Robert Gonzalez, and Brian Bolton planted drugs on him at 4210 S. Prairie.

10/20/2009 – CR #1031334 On October 20, 2009, Alvin Jones, in the presence of E Ilsworth Smith, crashed his police car into Charles Rogers. Two contemporaneous “event queries”—or calls to the Chicago police—report that a man had been “struck by an auto.” Hospital records confirm that Rogers had a serious leg injury from blunt force trauma. Rogers gave a recorded statement, describing an officer believed to be Watts who arrived at the scene and said, “Look man, you gotta take this one bad case and don’t go to the hospital or if you do, we got you when you come back.” Rogers did go to hospital, and as punishment, the police planted 7 live 9-mm bullets on him and fabricated a claim that Rogers simply fell while running and was never hit by a car.

10/21/2009 – One day later, on October 21, 2009, an officer Bailey “ran down [LeRoy] McCambry with his motor vehicle,” breaking McCambry’s hip and causing extreme physical pain. McCambry then alleged that Nichols and Leano arrived, but they ignored McCambry’s pleas for medical care and claims that he hit him with his car. After being “dragged” by Nichols and Leano to the 2nd District, McCambry told Watts what happened and that he needed to go to the hospital. “Watts informed McCambry that if McCambry went to the hospital, the police officers would put a gun case on him and put cases on him.” McCambry then alleged that “Nichols falsified his police report omitting the fact that McCambry was struck by the police car.” Nichols also falsely testified in front of the grand jury that during Officer Bailey’s pursuit, McCambry “fell between a fence and Bailey’s car.”

2010 – CPD whistleblowers Spalding and Echevarria have meeting with DEA re: Watts where DEA agent claimed that the DEA was investigating Watts 10 years prior, circa 2000.

11/19/2010 – FBI report calls Watts the “main target” of the investigation. This report goes on to say that Watts is accused of committing a host of other crimes, including theft, the possession and distribution of drugs for money, ‘planting’ drugs on subjects, and paying informants with drugs.

2/18/2011 – FBI report states, without qualification, that “Watts has engaged in the systemic extortion of drug dealers in the Second District.” This report goes on to say that Watts is accused of committing a host of other crimes, including theft, the possession and distribution of drugs for money, ‘planting’ drugs on subjects, and paying informants with drugs.” The redacted report states that other Chicago Police Officers were “directly involved in the extortion of drug dealer’s funds,” and it lists Kallatt Mohammed. The names of the other officers listed directly before Kallatt Mohammed are redacted.

6/10/2011 – CR A redacted complainant alleged that on June 10, 2011, Nichols and Leano placed an unknown object into the complainant’s rectum

2012 – CPD Officers Watts and Mohammed recorded and federally charged with stealing money from and paying off a federal government informant.

4/26/2012 – CR #1053673 Gonzalez beat the redacted complainant on April 26, 2012 while Jones was one of several officers that falsely arrested him. Bolton provided a witness statement in support of Gonzalez and Jones

8/17/2012 – CPD Officer Mohammed pleads guilty to federal charges. During that sentencing hearing, the U.S. Attorney argued that Mohammed’s conduct was “repeated and ongoing,” and noted that there were “multiple [uncharged] occasions” where he participated “in picking up essentially protection payments from drug dealers, some of which were from sources who were working with the Government, unbeknownst to him.” The Government noted crimes committed by Mohammed in 2007, 2008, as well as the charged offense in 2011.

11/1/2012 – CPD whistleblowers Spalding and Echeverria file a federal whistleblowing lawsuit alleging that they had suffered retaliation ordered by supervisory personnel within the Chicago Police Department for exposing the criminal conduct of Watts and his tactical team. The amended complaint makes clear that Spalding and Echeverria were working with the FBI from 2007-2012 as part of the undercover investigation of Watts, Mohammed, and others at the Second District, and that t hey uncovered “evidence of illegal activity being committed by various Chicago Police Officers.”

1/10/2013 – CR #1059446 The redacted complainant alleged that on January 10, 2013, Bolton, Gonzalez, and Nichols stopped and searched him without justification.

7/4/2013 – CR #1063293 On July 4, 2013, Gonzalez discharged his firearm 11 times toward 17-year-old Christian Green, striking and killing him. Nichols and Leano testified at the federal civil rights trial on his behalf. The jury found the shooting unjustified.

12/19/2013 – Watts pleads guilty to federal charges. In a written memorandum, the Government noted that Watts’ criminal acts continued “[f]or years” and that he engaged in “years of crime.” Watts “used his badge and his position as a sergeant with the Chicago Police Department to shield his own criminal activity from law enforcement scrutiny. He recruited another CPD officer into his crimes, stealing drug money and extorting protection payments from the drug dealers who terrorized the community that, he, the defendant, had sworn to protect.”

Looking merely at a five-month period from December 2007 – May 2008, the Government noted that Watts and Mohammed routinely “extort[ed] protection payments from drug dealers in exchange for agreeing not to arrest them.” According to the memorandum, Mohammed admitted, over this five-month period, he, alone, was responsible for picking up between \$20,000 and \$25,000 in protection payments for Watts. The Government detailed many other uncharged criminal acts of Watts, including four payments totaling \$3,700 to one government informant, and two payments totaling \$1,000 to a second informant. Both informants claimed these payments were just the tip of the iceberg and just part of the “day-to-day workings” of Watts’ involvement in the drug trade at Ida B. Wells.

11/18/2014 – CPD whistleblower Spalding notes, in a deposition, that perhaps as far as ten years prior to 2007, an FBI Agent named Ken Samuels reached out to her about “illegal activity” involving “multiple officers, including Sergeant Watts.” Spalding explained that she reported information regarding Watts to authorities, explaining, at one time, that she told them, “that continuously the same names continuously popped up by people from different areas, whether it was Englewood or [Ida B. Wells] or the South Side, all consistently naming Ronald Watts and members of his team committing the same crimes of robbing the drug dealers, false arrests, stealing the money, extortion.”

At the sentencing hearing itself, the Government repeated these claims, noting Watts’ ongoing criminal conduct started in “at least 2007.”

12/2/2014 – CPD whistleblower Echeverria notes, in a deposition, that as of August 2008 the FBI was well aware of what Watts, Mohammed “and others” had been doing for “[d]amn near a decade.” Echeverria called it “a criminal enterprise” that included “extorting money from drug dealers, stealing narcotics themselves, selling narcotics to rival gangs or rival buildings. . . . Basically facilitating the narcotics trade.”

12/4/2014 – CPD Internal Affairs (IAD) Lieutenant Juan Rivera states, in a deposition, confirmed that as far back as 2004, Watts was being investigated by Internal Affairs. Rivera further confirmed that there were other officers involved in the illegal activity beyond Watts and Mohammed, calling it “a team of officers.”

2/27/2015 – CPD Michael Spaargaren swears in affidavit that while working on the Public Housing South team supervised by Watts, as far back as October 2000, he witnessed Watts, Mohammed, and other members of Watts’s crew fail to log or inventory large amounts of narcotics and drug money seized during drug busts. This occurred no fewer than five times. Spaargaren eventually confronted Watts about the missing inventory; in response, Watts both threatened to falsify a case against Spaargaren and made veiled threats to his safety. Spaargaren later informed Spaargaren James Spratt about the missing inventory; Lt. Spratt, in turn, accused Spaargaren of misconduct, and threatened that both his career and life would be in jeopardy if Spaargaren reported Watts’ conduct to Internal Affairs.

12/14/2015 – Retired CPD-IAD officer Pete Koconis testifies that he was aware of Watts corruption starting in 1999 and he was also aware that the IAD the investigation targeted multiple members of Watts’ team who were involved in criminal activity. This investigation was still ongoing, and had been for many years, by the time Koconis left IAD in 2004 or 2005. Koconis swore that Officers Brian Bolton, Robert Gonzalez, Alvin Jones, and Douglas Nichols were officers “working in consort with Sergeant Watts and were being investigated” in the FBI-led investigation.

1/14/2016 – Ben Baker walks out of prison after nearly a decade of imprisonment after the CCSAO dismisses charges against him.

In relation to the cases, then Cook County State’s Attorney Criminal Prosecutions Chief Fabio Valentini told NBC5: “The conviction’s tainted. Now it’s a fact that (Watts) is a dirty police officer.” Then Cook County State’s Attorney Anita Alvarez noted that the conviction “can no longer stand,” in light of Watts and Officer Kallatt Mohammed’s federal criminal convictions.

March 2016 – Baker and his wife Clarissa Glenn exonerated in a second case and found factually innocent on the basis of Watts and his team framing them.

5/31/2016 – Spalding/Echeverria CPD whistleblowing lawsuit settled for \$2 Million on the day the trial was set to commence after Mayor Rahm Emmanuel was ordered to testify about his statements acknowledging a Chicago police code of silence.

12/14/2016 – Lionel White, Sr. is exonerated after the CCSAO indicates it has no objection.

5/6/2017 – Responding to interrogatories in a civil rights lawsuit brought by Ben Baker and Clarissa Glenn, Kallatt Mohammed takes the Fifth when asked about framing Baker, Glenn, and others.

Summer 2017 – Responding to interrogatories in the civil lawsuit brought by Ben Baker and Clarissa Glenn, Watts pleads the fifth to questions regarding soliciting bribes from Ben Baker, giving false testimony in criminal proceedings against Ben Baker, planting drugs on Ben Baker, planting drugs and/or guns on civilians. Watts also takes the Fifth when asked if he participated in the murder of Wilbert Moore.

2/27/2017 – CCSAO publicly announces that the Conviction Integrity Unit will review “cases of incarcerated individuals where Watts was substantively involved.”

7/10/2017- CCSAO voluntarily dismissed the three drug convictions of William Carter, and the drug conviction of Bruce Powell.

The Corruption of Ronald Watts

1996-

2017

The Exoneration Project