

# GW EXTREMISM TRACKER

## TERRORISM IN THE UNITED STATES

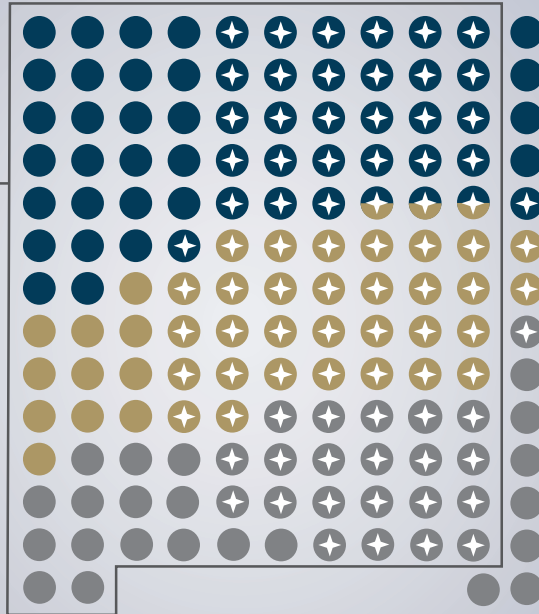
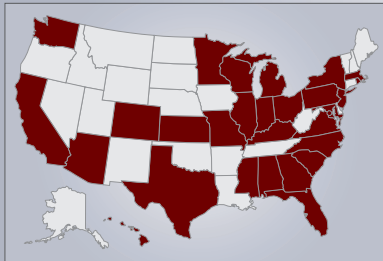
Program on Extremism  
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

**147** INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN CHARGED IN THE U.S. ON OFFENSES RELATED to the Islamic State (also known as IS, ISIS, and ISIL) since March 2014, when the first arrests occurred. Of those:

The average age of those charged is **28**

**90%** are male

Their activities were located in **28** states and the District of Columbia



**42%** were accused of attempting to travel or successfully traveled abroad.

**31%** were accused of being involved in plots to carry out attacks on U.S. soil.

**58%** were charged in an operation involving an informant and/or an undercover agent.

★ indicates law enforcement operation

The average length of sentence in years **13.5\*** **88** HAVE PLEADED OR BEEN FOUND GUILTY

\* Uses 470 months for life sentences per the practice of the U.S. Sentencing Commission'

## Islamic State–Related Apprehensions/Charges

### MIRSAD KANDIC

NOV 1 **36**  NY

An indictment charging Mirsad Kandic with several counts of conspiring or attempting to provide material support to IS, including one count resulting in death, was unsealed. Kandic was extradited to the United States from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and was also arraigned on November 1. According to the criminal complaint, Kandic, a 36-year-old former permanent resident of the U.S. who lived in New York City, left the U.S. in December of 2013 and successfully traveled to Syria to join IS. In alleged online communications, Kandic facilitated other individual's travel to Syria to join the group as part of role as a border police offi-

cer and background investigator for IS. One individual Kandic reportedly assisted was 18-year-old Australian citizen Jake Bilardi, who traveled to Syria in 2014 and later conducted a March 2015 suicide bombing in Iraq. Sources: [Kandic Criminal Complaint](#), [DOJ Press Release](#)

### SAYFULLO SAIPOV

NOV 21 **29**  NY

Sayfullo Saipov, the alleged perpetrator of the October 31, 2017 truck-ramming attack in Manhattan, New York City, was charged with eight counts of murder in aid of racketeering, twelve counts of attempted

murder in aid of racketeering, one count of providing material support to IS, and one count of violence and destruction of a motor vehicle resulting in death. According to the indictment, Saipov was inspired to conduct the attack from IS propaganda material found on his phone, and began planning the attack a year prior to carrying it out. After the attack, which killed eight and injured 12 more, Saipov was shot by law enforcement, arrested, and hospitalized. In his hospital room, Saipov reportedly told investigators that he “felt good about what he had done” and requested to display the IS flag in the room. Sources: [Saipov Criminal Complaint](#), [Saipov Indictment](#), [DOJ Press Release](#)

## Legal Proceedings (IS & Other Groups)

### YAHYA FAROOQ MOHAMMAD

NOV 6 39  OH

Thirty-nine-year-old former Columbus, Ohio resident Yahya Farooq Mohammad was sentenced to 27 and a half years in prison after pleading guilty to providing material support for Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Together with three co-defendants, whose trials are pending, Mohammad conspired to travel to Yemen to provide support for AQAP, and additionally raised money to support Anwar al-Awlaki, a key American ideological figure and leader of the group. In 2009, Mohammad traveled to Yemen with over \$20,000; he delivered the money to a courier, who was tasked with passing it on to al-Awlaki. In 2015, Mohammad was indicted in federal court. While awaiting trial, he contacted a confidential human source who was posing as a contract killer, and attempted to solicit the murder of his trial judge.

Sources: [DOJ Press Release](#), [BBC](#)

### HOUCINE GHOUL

NOV 13 43  NC

Houcine Ghoul, a 43-year-old Fayetteville, NC resident, pleaded guilty to lying on his application for U.S. citizenship and several tax fraud charges. Ghoul, a Tunisian citizen, lied specifically to investigators

about his support for IS. On the citizenship application that he filed in February of 2017, he answered that he had no associations with terrorist groups. A subsequent investigation of Ghoul’s social media presence and an operation involving a confidential human source uncovered that Ghoul frequently expressed his support for IS and its activities on social media, and told the confidential source that he was attaining an American passport to travel to Syria and join the group. Sources: [Ghoul Criminal Complaint](#), [Fayetteville Observer](#)

### MARIE CASTELLI

NOV 22 56  KY

Fifty-six-year-old Maysville, Kentucky resident Marie Castelli pleaded guilty to two counts of interstate communication of a threat. While an active member of a Facebook group for IS supporters, Castelli posted links to a “hit list” of names and addresses of U.S. service members distributed by IS members, with accompanying messages encouraging members of the Facebook group to target them for attacks. Each count carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison. Sources: [Castelli Plea Agreement](#)

### JAMES GONZALO MEDINA

NOV 28  FL

James Gonzalo Medina was sentenced to 25 years in federal prison for attempting a bombing attack against a Jewish community center in Aventura, Florida. Medina pleaded guilty to a federal hate crime and attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction in August of 2017. During the planning stages of the attack, Medina discussed carrying out the bombing on behalf of a litany of jihadist organizations, including IS and Al Shabaab. Sources: [DOJ Press Release](#), [Miami Herald](#)

### AHMED ABU KHATALLAH

NOV 28

A federal jury found Ahmed Abu Khatallah guilty of providing material support to a foreign terrorist or

ganization (Ansar al-Sharia), conspiring to provide material support for terrorism, using an assault rifle during a crime of violence, and maliciously destroying U.S. property. These charges stemmed from Abu Khatallah's role in the 2012 attack on a U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, that resulted in the deaths of U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens, State Department information officer Sean Smith, and security officers Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty. Abu Khatallah was additionally charged with their murders and ten other charges, but the jury did not find him guilty of the remaining counts of the indictment. Each charge that Abu Khatallah was convicted of carries a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison. Sources: [CNN](#), [Washington Post](#)