



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth - Police Department



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DATE: 3/28/2019

SUBJECT: Two Charged with Sex Trafficking

BY: Ingrid Hornibrook

NATURE OF INCIDENT: Sex Crime

CASE NO.:

INCIDENT DATE: 3/21/2019

INCIDENT TIME:

INCIDENT LOCATION: Various

[DULUTH, MN] - On Thursday, March 21, the Duluth Police Department Juvenile Services Unit along with multiple partner agencies conducted a search warrant, which resulted in the arrest of five individuals, three of which were released as they were determined to be employee victims. Shuangyan Yang (49) and Matthew Shykes (60) were both charged with sex trafficking and racketeering. Yang and Shykes are owners of Shuangyan's Spa along with Better Massage in Duluth, MN and Superior Soothing Massage in Superior, WI.

In the fall of 2017, the Duluth Police Department began an investigation into the aforementioned massage parlors owned by Yang and Shykes. The investigation was prompted by several tips and intelligence from concerned community members. After a year-and-a-half-long investigation, investigators were able to gather enough evidence to make arrests and remove this harmful activity from our community.

"Trafficking of people for the purpose of sexual exploitation and labor is a globally recognized problem affecting millions of people of all ages, races, and gender identities," stated Mayor Emily Larson. "It is happening around the country, and it is happening here in Duluth. It is why we have made this a priority, and it is why we partner with organizations such as PAVSA and why we work so hard to put the people impacted by this industry at the center of what we do so that we can do right by them. I'm continually proud of the work our City and our community does in naming these serious and complex issues and taking tangible steps to work together as a community to help solve them."

"This successful outcome would not have been possible without our law enforcement partnerships," stated Duluth Police Chief Mike Tusken. "Sex Trafficking is not a crime that happens somewhere else to people we don't know. Sex Trafficking happens in our community and our department is dedicating the resources to hold sex traffickers and sex buyers accountable. Most importantly, we work to free victims from the sex trade, educate our community of the signs to look for and empower them to report it when they see it. In many cases, women are the victims of sexual exploitation. One sure way to rid our community of sexual exploitation and trafficking is to eliminate the demand. We all need to work to ensure the men and boys in our lives respect the dignity of every woman and pledge not to buy it and to stand tall in opposition to it."

Other agencies involved in the success of this investigation include the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Human Trafficking Task Force, East Metro Trafficking Task Force, the IRS, St. Louis County Attorney's Office, Homeland Security, FBI, Hermantown Police Department, Superior Police Department, Douglas County and St. Louis County Sheriff.

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