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City of Duluth Police Department

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DATE: 02/08/2013
NATURE OF INCIDENT: 30 Arrested in "Operation Crackdown"
CASE NO.:
INCIDENT DATE :02/05/2013
INCIDENT TIME:
INCIDENT LOCATION: Duluth/Superior Area
SUBJECT: 30 Arrested in "Operation Crackdown"
BY: DPD Public Information Officer Jim Hansen (218) 390-2232

On Tuesday, February 5th, 2013 Investigators from the Lake Superior Drug and Violent Crime Task Force and the Duluth Police Department initiated the arrest phase of "Operation Crackdown".

"Operation Crackdown" is a crack cocaine trafficking investigation focused in the Duluth-Superior area that was opened in May of 2012. At this point in the operation, over 37 suspects have been identified and most of those suspects currently have outstanding warrants for their arrest. Many of the suspects in this investigation have significant criminal histories including offenses related to drug trafficking, weapon violations, assaults, and other violent crimes.

The suspects in this case were charged and will be prosecuted by the Saint Louis County Attorney's Office. Assistance and resources were provided by prosecutorial staff as well as staff involved in fraud investigations. The Lake Superior Drug and Violent Crime Task Force and the Duluth Police Department would like to thank St. Louis County Attorney Mark Rubin and his staff for their dedication and participation in this investigation.

Many of these defendants are facing multiple charges for the sale of crack cocaine that occurred both in the Cities of Duluth and Superior. Several defendants will be prosecuted in Douglas County, Wisconsin, for charges stemming from the operation.

Beginning on February 5th, 2012 teams from several state and federal law enforcement agencies assembled to execute arrest and search warrants at several Twin Ports locations. One search warrant was served in the City of Superior. The search warrant was based on information compiled in a joint investigation with The Superior Police Department Narcotics Unit and the Task Force. The warrant was served in the 1100 block of North 12th Street where crack cocaine, cash, and other evidence was seized. Two suspects were arrested at that location for outstanding warrants related to the investigation. These two suspects are identified as:

- Belinda Marie Walker dob/3/3/1979 A.K.A "Bey-Bey" - 6 counts 3rd degree sale of controlled substance, 2 counts 2nd degree sale of controlled substance in a school zone, 1 count wrongfully obtaining public assistance
- Artist Samuel Sanders dob/6/12/1979 A.K.A. "A-Dog" -1 count 3rd degree sale of

controlled substance, 1 count 2nd degree sale of controlled substance in a school zone

Other suspects were arrested in Superior with the assistance of the Superior Police Department, these included:

- Latonya Alexander Moss dob/7/19/1987 A.K.A. "Tiny" - 1 count 3rd degree sale of, 1 count wrongfully obtaining public assistance-aid and abet
- Darrius Darrell Guyton dob/8/19/1984 A.K.A. "Ave" - 6 counts 3rd degree sale of controlled substance, - 6 counts 2nd degree sale of controlled substance in a school zone, 3 counts wrongfully obtaining public assistance-aid and abet
- Dawson Kenneth Coleman dob/11/23/1990 - 1 count 3rd degree sale of controlled substance, 1 count wrongfully obtaining public assistance-aid and abet

Four search warrants were served in the City of Duluth on February 5th at the following locations:

- 900 block of 88th Avenue West
- 500 block of North 39th Avenue West
- 100 block of East 7th Street
- 700 block of Upham Road

During these searches, additional quantities of crack cocaine, cash, and other evidence was seized. The following two suspects were arrested:

- Russell Eddie Lee Jones dob/10/14/1975 A.K.A. "Big C" - 2 counts 2nd degree sale of controlled substance, 2 counts 2nd degree sale of controlled substance in a school zone, 1 count wrongfully obtaining public assistance
- Albert Lewis Johnson Sr. A.K.A. dob/12/26/1956 "Big Al" - 1 count 1st degree sale of controlled substance, 6 counts 3rd degree sale of controlled substance, 6 counts 2nd degree sale of controlled substance in a school zone, 1 count 5th degree sale of marijuana, 1 count wrongfully obtaining public assistance-aid and abet

Charges of 1st degree sale of crack cocaine were requested on Russell Jones based on evidence seized in a search warrant.

Other arrests that occurred in the City of Duluth on February 5th include the following:

- Christopher Forrest Cook dob/5/17/1976 - Violation of probation warrant for 2nd degree burglary and 5th degree controlled substance crime
- Matthew Dee Hollingsworth dob/7/26/1985 A.K.A. "Black" - 1 count 3rd degree sale of controlled substance, 2 counts sale of a simulated controlled substance
- Timothy Lee Johnson dob/11/25/1962 A.K.A. "Bagman" - 7 counts 3rd degree sale of controlled substance, 3 counts wrongfully obtaining public assistance-aid and abet
- Daryl Brian Pearson dob/11/21/1956 - 1 count 3rd degree sale of controlled substance
- Sylvester NMN Robinson dob/2/6/1954 - 1 count 3rd degree sale of controlled substance
- Juanita NMN Moy dob/11/6/1954 A.K.A. "TT" - 3 counts 3rd degree sale of controlled substance, 1 count 5th degree possession of controlled substance
- Christopher Edward Soward dob/6/8/1975 A.K.A. "CJ" - 4 counts 3rd degree sale of controlled substance
- Belinda Marie Walker Sr. dob/2/8/1957 (Mother of "Bey Bey") - 4 counts 3rd degree sale of a controlled substance

Some of the suspects in the investigation were identified as residents of the Twin Cities area. With the assistance of a team from the St. Paul Police Department, two of five metro area suspects were arrested and are identified as:

- Jarvis Michael Cunningham dob/9/3/1988 A.K.A. "A-1" (arrested in the 4200 block of Oliver Avenue North in Minneapolis) - 4 counts 3rd degree sale of controlled substance
- Darius Jared Honeycutt dob/3/7/1986 A.K.A. "D" - 2 counts 3rd degree sale of controlled substance

At approximately 1700 hours on February 6th 2013, a search warrant was executed in the 100 block of West 5th Street in the City of Duluth. Based on the suspect's criminal history which included a homicide conviction, the Duluth Police Department Tactical Response Team was utilized. The suspect was arrested without incident. A subsequent search yielded evidence that the suspect had likely flushed crack cocaine down the toilet upon realizing that officers were there. Despite this, heroin and cash was located and seized during the search. Of additional concern was the seizure of two handguns from inside the residence. The two guns, one of which was loaded with ammunition, had been concealed above ceiling tiles in the residence. The suspect was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for 1 count 2nd degree sale of controlled substance in a school zone and additional charges related to drug and firearms violations. This suspect was identified as:

- Ronald Paris Riles dob/4/7/1977 A.K.A."P"

Later on February 6th, another suspect was arrested and identified as:

- Shawn Wardell Embry dob/8/9/1976 A.K.A. "Detroit" - 1 count 3rd degree sale of controlled substance, 1 count 5th degree possession of a controlled substance

At approximately 1000 hours on February 7, 2013 another suspect in the investigation was arrested and is identified as:

- Leon NMN Jones dob/12/17/1979 A.K.A. "Lee John" a.k.a. - 4 counts 3rd degree sale of controlled substance

At approximately 1245 hours on February 7th 2013, a search warrant was executed in the 200 block of East 2nd Street in the City of Duluth. During this search, a large quantity of crack cocaine, cash, and other evidence related to the investigation was seized. Three individuals were arrested and lodged at the St. Louis County Jail on charges of 1st degree possession and sale of crack cocaine. These suspects are identified as:

- Thomas Ardell Gentry A.K.A. "Streets" dob/10/12/1988
- Jeffery NMN Holman dob/1/28/1958
- Laquendrick Lenel As-Sidiq dob/12/9/1989

Holman was the resident of the apartment where the search warrant was served. Gentry and As-Sidiq are residents of Minneapolis and based on current information were in Duluth for the purpose of selling crack cocaine.

Six other suspects charged in this investigation that were in custody on other charges on February 5th

2013 include the following:

- Zuriel Antwon Gray dob/7/3/1980 A.K.A “D-Boy, Nephew, Twan, T-Money” - 4 counts 3rd degree sale of controlled substance
- Anthony Alton Holloway dob/6/16/1986 A.K.A “T, Tone, Teeth” - Controlled substance sales charges in Douglas County, WI
- Loretta Lee McGowen dob/8/23/1951 - 1 count 3rd degree sale of controlled substance, 1 count liability for crimes of another
- Ronald Edward Profit dob/6/15/1988 A.K.A “P” - 1 count 2nd degree sale of controlled, 1 count 3rd degree possession of controlled substance,
- Clinton Lee Strother dob/7/31/1958 A.K.A “Uncle” - 1 count 2nd degree sale of controlled substance in a school zone
- Derrick Lamar Tyler dob/10/2/1967 A.K.A “Peace or Cold Peace” - Controlled substance sales charges in Douglas County, WI
- Kenyon Rashawn Latham dob/9/5/1991 A.K.A “Yannie” - 1 count 3rd degree sale of a controlled substance

Investigators are continuing to search for at least 10 other suspects related to this investigation.

During this investigation, task force investigators identified a unique trend in narcotics trafficking. Information obtained from confidential informants and other sources outlined a practice of trading EBT/SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) cards in exchange for crack cocaine. These trades were made at rates equal to approximately 50 percent of the face value of the card. Crack cocaine with a street value of approximately \$100.00 was purchased with cards holding benefits equal to \$200.00. In partnership with investigators from the United States Department of Agriculture-Office of the Inspector General, task force investigators were able to obtain “decoy” EBT/SNAP cards for use in the operation. Multiple controlled buys were conducted by task force investigators utilizing the trade of these cards for crack cocaine.

Several of the suspects in this case have been charged with sales charges related to trafficking crack cocaine and with crimes related to wrongfully obtaining public assistance.

Joe N. Smith, Special Agent-in-Charge for USDA’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) Midwest Region, expressed his appreciation to the Lake Superior Drug and Violent Crime Task Force, the Duluth Police Department, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives for working together to investigate and prosecute criminal conduct that diverts vital Federal nutrition assistance away from needy families. The fact that this case involved food stamp benefits being traded for narcotics makes it all the more egregious.

As in the past, a strong partnership with The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) aided in this investigation. The ATF supported the task force by providing financial assistance, investigative resources, and equipment.

Scott D. Sweetow, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) St. Paul Division stated, “ATF along with our local, state, and federal partners, have successfully removed a number of illegal traffickers from the Twin Ports. ATF will continue to utilize our resources to prevent and reduce violent crime in this community.”

The arrest phase conducted on February 5, 2013 was made possible with the assistance of several law enforcement agencies. These agencies include the following:

- Superior Police Department
- St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
- Boundary Waters Drug Task Force
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives
- United States Department of Agriculture-OIG
- United States Marshal Service
- United States Forest Service
- Cloquet Police Department
- Carlton County Sheriff's Office
- Fond du Lac Police Department
- Lake County Sheriff's Office
- St. Louis County Attorney's Office
- St. Paul Police Department

Public assistance fraud is a growing concern. Persons who give false information or withhold facts in order to receive Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), MSA, food stamps, general assistance, child care or medical assistance may be guilty of fraud.

If you have information about fraud, you may wish to report:

- Persons not reporting income
- Incorrect reporting of persons living in a home
- Misuse of food stamps or EBT cards
- Falsifying of information on application
- Unreported property and assets
- Persons receiving dual benefits from more than one state

If you suspect someone of misusing or abusing Minnesota assistance programs, call the toll free Welfare Fraud Hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Duluth Area: (218) 726-2693

Iron Range Area: (218) 262-6000

Statewide: 800-627-9977

If you choose to, you may make this report anonymously.





Loretta Lee McGowan



Latonya Alexander Moss



Juanita Moy



Artist Samuel Sanders



Christopher Edward Soward



Clinton Lee Strother



Daryl Brian Pearson



Ronald Edward Proffit



Sylvester Robinson



Derrick Lamarr Tyler



Belinda Marie Walker, Jr.



Belinda Marie Walker, Sr.



Shawn Wardell Embry



Leon Jones



Jeffrey Holman



Ronald Paris Riles



Thomas Ardell Gentry



Darius Jarard Honeycutt



Laquedrick Lemel As-Sidiq