

JACKSON COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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JACKSON COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE

In response to an emerging drug problem, the Jackson County Drug Task Force was first organized in 1986 as a multi-jurisdictional investigative initiative. Throughout the 1980's, drug trafficking and an active drug culture were a part of daily life throughout Kansas City, Missouri, and much of Jackson County. Illicit drugs, such as crack cocaine, methamphetamine and PCP, were openly traded on street corners. Drug houses and methamphetamine labs sprung up throughout our county overnight. During its initial years, the Task Force was funded through private donations and one grant.

In 1989 Jackson County voters approved a new one-quarter of one-percent anti-drug sales tax, which later became known as the Community Backed Anti-Crime Tax (COMBAT). The tax would support a broad-based attack on drug abuse and drug-related violent crimes. One of the enforcement initiatives of COMBAT funding was the Jackson County Drug Task Force.

Renewed in 1995, 2004, 2009 and 2016 the COMBAT tax now entirely funds the JCDTF, providing the Task Force with an adjusted budget of \$3,321,723 in 2022.

JACKSON COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE MISSION

The County of Jackson has approximately 604.84 square miles. With a population of 700,307 according to the Census Bureau, Jackson County is the second most populous of Missouri's 114 counties, after St. Louis County. The Task Force's focus is Jackson County, which includes all suburban jurisdictions and unincorporated areas. The purpose of the Task Force is to provide a combined and unified response to the drug and narcotics related violent crime problem as it exists in Jackson County.

While the Task Force participates with all federal, state and local Kansas City area law enforcement agencies, its primary investigative mission and focus continues to be in Jackson County and the outlying areas of the county, which are not adequately serviced by other law enforcement agencies. Task Force Detectives work in unison with other agencies' personnel assigned to the Task Force to investigate drug and violent crimes related to the illegal drug trade. These investigations range from Jackson County to anywhere in the continental United States. Task Force Detectives are specially trained in undercover operations, long-term investigations and covert surveillance techniques.

In 2022, the Task Force participated in multiple Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) operations in conjunction with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Department of Homeland Security. These partnerships allowed the Task Force partial reimbursement for narcotics buy money and overtime costs associated with the OCDETF investigations. The Task Force was actively involved in five OCDETF investigations in 2022.

In 2011, the JCDTF signed with the Missouri National Guard to provide one Intelligence Analyst to assist with long-term investigations. This agreement continued in 2022.

A Task Force Detective obtained a high-level security clearance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation in order to assist in investigations involving large-scale Transnational Criminal Drug Organizations. Additionally, the Task Force is coordinating with the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Kansas City Metro Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force Strike Force to address the increasing problem of violent crime and Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTO) with ties to Mexico. These Drug Trafficking Organizations have set up sophisticated distribution networks in Jackson County and are obtaining large amounts of illegal drugs from Mexican-based Drug Trafficking Organizations for distribution in Jackson County.

JACKSON COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE ORGANIZATION

The Jackson County Drug Task Force is a voluntary law enforcement organization that operates under the direction of an Executive Board comprised of representatives from fourteen (14) law enforcement agencies in Jackson County. Each of these law enforcement agencies signed an Agreement for Law Enforcement Services with the Task Force.

The Executive Board of the Task Force includes the Police Chiefs from each of the participating cities and the Sheriff of Jackson County. A representative from the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Federal Bureau of Investigation attend the Executive Board meetings in a spirit of cooperation and to coordinate investigative efforts.

Seven (7) of the participating law enforcement agencies and the Jackson County Sheriff's Office contribute or "loan" manpower to the Task Force. The Task Force reimburses all salaries, benefits, equipment and other associated costs with personnel assigned to the Task Force. Costs for reimbursement are paid from grants and funding generated by the countywide anti-crime sales tax (COMBAT).

In 2022, in order to provide a more combined and unified response to the drug- and narcotic-related violent crime problem in Independence, the Detectives assigned to the Police Departments Drug Enforcement Unit (DEU) were co-located with the Task Force. The Task Force reimburses 50% of the salaries of those DEU Detectives.

Participating agencies include:

- **Blue Springs Police - 2 Investigators (1 vacant)**
- **Buckner Police**
- **Grain Valley Police – 1 Investigator**
- **Grandview Police - 1 Sergeant, 0 Investigator (2 vacant)**
- **Greenwood Police**
- **Independence Police – 1 Sergeant, 2 Investigators (4 vacant)**
- **Jackson County – 1 OIC, 1 Administrative, 1 Property/Evidence Officer**
- **Jackson County Sheriff – 2 Investigators (1 vacant)**
- **Lake Lotawana Police**
- **Lee's Summit Police – 1 Sergeant, 5 Investigators (1 vacant)**
- **Lone Jack Police**
- **Missouri State Highway Patrol**
- **Oak Grove Police - 1 Investigator**
- **Raytown Police**
- **Sugar Creek Police - 1 Investigator**

Detectives co-located with the Task Force.

- **Independence Police Drug Enforcement Unit – 4 Detectives**

The Task Force also has two positions on loan from the following:

- **Missouri National Guard – Analyst**
- **Drug Enforcement Administration – 1 Special Agent (vacant)**

JACKSON COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE

K-9

In 2022 the Jackson County Drug Task Force added Harlow, a 2-year-old German shorthaired pointer, as a part of the Jackson County Drug Task Force team. Harlow is certified by the Missouri Police Canine Association (MPCA) as a drug detection K-9 trained to “alert” to a variety of illegal drugs and their derivatives.

Harlow has conducted 31 deployments, including parcel interdiction with the Kansas City Missouri Police Department at various parcel distribution centers in the metropolitan area and parcel interdiction with the U.S Postal service. Additionally, Harlow has conducted multiple vehicle and residential searches for the Task Force and Police Departments across Jackson County.

Harlow’s certification has been used for probable cause statements in numerous state and federal search warrant affidavits.

Harlow’s deployment’s has led to the following seizures:

- 37,875 Counterfeit M-30 pills (Fentanyl)
- 6,711.58 g Methamphetamine
- 521.1 g Cocaine
- 9.5 g Heroin
- 9 g Fentanyl
- 8,716.8 g GammaHydroxtButate (GHB)
- 5720 g Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)

KANSAS CITY METRO ORGANIZED CRIME DRUG ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE STRIKE FORCE

The Jackson County Drug Task Force continued its partnership with the Kansas City Metro Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force Strike Force (KCMSF). The Jackson County Drug Task Force is one of four local agencies participating in the KCMSF, along with the Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas, police departments and the Kansas Bureau of Investigation. The Jackson County Drug Task Force will be joining forces with multiple federal agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; the Department of Homeland Security; the Postal Inspection Service; and Internal Revenue Service.

The Kansas City metropolitan area is near the geographical center of the United States and at the intersection of several of the nation's busiest interstate highways, thus making it a major transit point for the transportation of drugs, firearms, and illicit proceeds to and from significant market areas across the country.

The KCMSF focus will be major criminal organizations, including criminal gangs, transnational drug cartels and other groups engaged in illicit activities that present a threat to public safety. The KCMSF will place special emphasis on addressing the significant methamphetamine threat identified in Jackson County and the Kansas City metropolitan area.

The KCMSF presents a united front against drug trafficking and violent crime throughout the metropolitan area coordinating agents and officers from both Missouri and Kansas with additional investigative resources to better protect our community from the violent scourge of drug trafficking.

Greater Kansas City joins these other metropolitan regions with Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force Strike Forces: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, El Paso, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, North Texas, Phoenix, Sacramento, San Diego, San Juan, southeast Michigan and Tampa.

NATIONAL INTEGRATED BALLISTICS IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

The Task Force established a program in which all recovered firearms will be test fired and the shell casings submitted into the National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) with the Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBS).

NIBEN is a national network system administered by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) to assist law enforcement in solving firearms-related crimes. IBS is the collection of electronic images of ballistic evidence recovered from crime scenes and test-fired firearms that have been taken into law enforcement custody. IBIS is a proven investigative and intelligence tool that can assist in the identification of leads that were not previously available, can link firearms evidence from multiple crimes committed with the same firearm and can link firearms evidence from a crime scene to a recovered firearm.

In June 2021 the Missouri Second Amendment Preservation Act (SAPA) became law dramatically decreasing the pursuit of firearm investigations and the purchase of illegal firearms in connection with controlled buys of illegal narcotics. As a result, the Task Force is prohibited from test firing or submitting shell casings into the NIBIN system in 2022.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES SEIZED/PURCHASED

2022	Grams	Dose	Value
Methamphetamine	152,437.65		\$18,292,518
Cocaine	10,448.46		\$1,411,528.00
Cocaine (crack)	7.30		\$985.50
Heroin	5,235.56		\$1,047,112
M-30 (fentanyl pills)		40,273	\$1,006,825
Fentanyl (powder)	10,289		\$1,543,350
MDMA (Ecstasy) (pills)		114	\$1,921.00
GammaHydroxyButate	8,716.80	3,007	\$75,175
Psilocybin (Mushrooms)	552.2		\$12,148
Prescription Pills		354	\$7,008
Xanax		0.50	
Marijuana	61,549		\$1,538,728.75
THC Edibles	2,153		\$109,803
THC Wax/Vape	4,414		\$225,114
TOTAL			

FIREARMS SEIZED/PURCHASED

Long Guns \$500 / each	Hand Guns \$400 / each
34	57
\$17,000	\$22,800

TOTAL VALUE OF ALL SEIZED CONTRABAND

Drug values based on adjusted street prices for illegal drugs 2020 Office of National Drug Control Policy Data

\$25,881,984

STATISTICS

	Cases Opened	Cases Closed	Search Warrants	Knock-n-Talks	Presentations	Narcotics Purchases	Money Recovered	Meth Labs Processed	Marijuana Growers Processed
2011	201	32	42	56	12	127	\$111,134	4	8
2012	124	206	42	66	10	180	\$411,048	1	3
2013	119	206	92	30	21	408	\$275,876	0	3
2014	74	208	48	48	1	158	\$424,762	0	2
2015	127	199	58	82	1	218	\$330,372	0	1
2016	132	301	61	21	4	170	\$136,261	1	0
2017	92	114	50	10	9	140	\$135,475	0	0
2018	80	110	50	6	8	170	\$302,206	0	2
2019	76	204	54	12	3	123	\$216,246	0	0
2020	76	45	32	0	1	135	\$64,479	0	0
2021	112	192	51	7	1	138	\$733,749	0	1
2022	119	136	41	6	9	156	\$600,582	2	0

CASE COMPARISON

	Total Cases Presented	Federal Cases	State Cases	Arrests	Warrant Arrests	Detectives Funded	Value of Seized Narcotics
2011	271	186	85	244		14	\$4,871,131
2012	339	250	89	427		13	\$4,116,215
2013	205	128	65	177		11	\$7,568,018
2014	204	106	98	209		11	\$8,894,042
2015	216	122	82	262	225	12	\$6,530,240
2016	290	215	75	292	222	13	\$5,218,156
2017	213	166	47	269	200	11	\$13,461,484
2018	92	65	27	187	94	14	\$16,149,483
2019	204	172	35	228	106	13	\$30,451,473
2020	192	135	45	159	64	15	\$9,635,079
2021	192	161	31	268	218	16	\$14,984,084
2022	311	246	65	316	75	22	\$25,457,480

PROSECUTION COMPARISON

Cases presented for prosecution

Federal											
2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
186	250	128	106	122	215	166	65	172	135	161	246

State											
2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
85	89	65	98	82	75	47	27	35	45	31	65

2022 Annual Statistics

QUARTERLY - ANNUAL	1st QUARTER TOTALS			2nd QUARTER TOTALS			3rd QUARTER TOTALS			4th QUARTER TOTALS			ANNUAL TOTALS		
Operations / Events															
Drug Purchases	29			38			44			45			156		
Drug Purchases (undercover)	0			19			25			9			53		
Attempt Drug Purchases	5			3			0			16			24		
Buy / Busts	1			2			5			3			11		
Controlled Deliveries	0			1			1			0			2		
Knock-n-Talks	0			3			2			1			6		
Search Warrants	3			20			9			9			41		
Pen Registers Established	1			0			1			0			2		
Call Out / Agency Assist	7			60			60			55			182		
Trash Pulls	2			1			4			0			7		
GPS Trackers	0			0			1			0			1		
Drug Trafficking Organization Case (DTO)	0			1			2			4			7		
Presentations	0			4			4			1			9		
Case With Analyst Support	0			0			1			0			1		
STRIVIN Referrals	0			3			1			2			6		
Charges Filed	Federal	State	Municipal	Federal	State	Municipal	Federal	State	Municipal	Federal	State	Municipal	Federal	State	Municipal
Methamphetamine	0	0	0	63	14	16	6	14	17	2	15	14	71	43	47
Cocaine Powder	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	3	0	0	6	0	6	9
Cocaine - Crack	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Marijuana	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	3
Marijuana Plants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MDMA / Ecstasy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Heroin	0	0	0	7	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	7	3	3
Other	0	0	0	162	7	3	0	2	9	4	4	10	166	13	22
Fugitive Arrests - Warrants															
Federal	0			47			3			5			55		
State	0			1			1			3			5		
Municipal	0			10			0			0			10		
Drugs Seized Weights															
Methamphetamine (Grams)	180.90			89523.57			17540.20			1001.00			108245.67		
Cocaine Powder (Grams)	32.30			8903.00			126.20			0.00			9061.50		
Cocaine - Crack (Grams)	0.00			0.00			7.30			0.00			7.30		
Marijuana (Grams)	675.40			50306.70			9520.15			0.00			60502.25		
Marijuana Plants (Plants)	0.00			0.00			0.00			0.00			0.00		
Heroin (Grams)	1.50			4529.26			27.70			0.00			4558.46		

QUARTERLY - ANNUAL	1st QUARTER TOTALS	2nd QUARTER TOTALS	3rd QUARTER TOTALS	4th QUARTER TOTALS	ANNUAL TOTALS
THC Wax (Grams)	258.20	4060.90	0.00	0.00	4319.10
Edibles (Grams)	0.00	2153.40	0.00	0.00	2153.40
Vape Cartridges (Units)	0.00	95.00	0.00	0.00	95.00
Fentanyl (Grams)	0.00	9905.00	89.80	0.00	9994.80
MDMA / Ecstasy (Units)	4.00	40.70	50.00	0.00	94.70
M-30 (Units)	0.00	2145.00	1177.00	2968.50	6290.50
PCP (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Oxycontin (Tablets)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hydrocodone (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Oxycodoone (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Xanax (Units)	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50
Prescription Drugs (Units)	1.00	142.50	160.50	0.00	304.00
Psilocybin Mushrooms (Grams)	0.00	522.20	30.00	0.00	552.20
Other	20.00	8.00	8.00	0.00	36.00
Drugs Purchased Weights					
Methamphetamine (Grams)	3506.10	24885.00	2957.80	6075.50	37424.40
Cocaine Powder (Grams)	179.30	403.46	58.30	221.80	862.86
Cocaine - Crack (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Marijuana (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	1046.90	1046.90
Marijuana Plants (Plants)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Heroin (Grams)	0.00	0.00	55.60	612.00	667.60
THC Wax (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Edibles (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vape Cartridges (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fentanyl (Grams)	0.00	0.00	8.90	276.80	285.70
MDMA / Ecstasy (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.00	19.00
M-30 (Units)	80.00	2300.00	7088.00	7139.50	16607.50
PCP (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Oxycontin (Tablets)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hydrocodone (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Oxycodoone (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Xanax (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Prescription Drugs (Units)	1.00	0.00	0.00	49.00	50.00
Psilocybin Mushrooms (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.00	4.25	0.80	5.05
Drugs Seized/ Purchased Weights					
Methamphetamine (Grams)	3687.00	114408.57	20498.00	7076.50	145670.07
Cocaine Powder (Grams)	211.60	9306.46	184.50	221.80	9924.36
Cocaine - Crack (Grams)	0.00	0.00	7.30	0.00	7.30
Marijuana (Grams)	675.40	50306.70	9520.15	1046.90	61549.15
Marijuana Plants (Plants)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Heroin (Grams)	1.50	4529.26	83.30	612.00	5226.06
THC Wax (Grams)	258.20	4060.90	0.00	0.00	4319.10

QUARTERLY - ANNUAL	1st QUARTER TOTALS	2nd QUARTER TOTALS	3rd QUARTER TOTALS	4th QUARTER TOTALS	ANNUAL TOTALS
Edibles (Grams)	0.00	2153.40	0.00	0.00	2153.40
Vape Cartridges (Units)	0.00	95.00	0.00	0.00	95.00
Fentanyl (Grams)	0.00	9905.00	98.70	276.80	10280.50
MDMA / Ecstasy (Units)	4.00	40.70	50.00	19.00	113.70
M-30 (Units)	80.00	4445.00	8265.00	10108.00	22898.00
PCP (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Oxycontin (Tablets)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hydrocodone (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Oxycodone (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Xanax (Units)	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50
Prescription Drugs (Units)	2.00	142.50	160.50	49.00	354.00
Psilocybin Mushrooms (Grams)	0.00	522.20	30.00	0.00	552.20
Other	20.00	8.00	12.25	0.80	41.05
K9 Activity					
K9 Training (Hours)	0.00	56.00	69.00	24.00	149.00
K9 Searches	0.00	3.00	14.00	4.00	21.00
K9 Seizures	0.00	0.00	7.00	3.00	10.00
K9 Seizure - Methamphetamine (Grams)	0.00	0.00	5710.58	1001.00	6711.58
K9 Seizure - Cocaine Powder (Grams)	0.00	0.00	521.10	0.00	521.10
K9 Seizure - Cocaine Crack (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Marijuana (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Marijuana (Plants)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Heroin (Grams)	0.00	0.00	9.50	0.00	9.50
K9 Seizure - THC Wax (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Edibles (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Vape Cartridges (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Fentanyl (Grams)	0.00	0.00	8.50	0.00	8.50
K9 Seizure - MDMA / Ecstasy (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - M-30 (Units)	0.00	0.00	4500.00	2968.50	7468.50
K9 Seizure - PCP (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Oxycontin (Tablets)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Hydrocodone (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Oxycodone (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Xanax (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Prescription Drugs (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Psilocybin Mushrooms (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K9 Seizure - Other	0.00	0.00	8716.80	0.00	8716.80
TOTAL Drugs Weights					
Methamphetamine (Grams)	3687.00	114464.57	26208.58	8077.50	152437.65
Cocaine Powder (Grams)	211.60	9309.46	705.60	221.80	10448.46

QUARTERLY - ANNUAL	1st QUARTER TOTALS	2nd QUARTER TOTALS	3rd QUARTER TOTALS	4th QUARTER TOTALS	ANNUAL TOTALS
Cocaine - Crack (Grams)	0.00	0.00	7.30	0.00	7.30
Marijuana (Grams)	675.40	50306.70	9520.15	1046.90	61549.15
Marijuana Plants (Plants)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Heroin (Grams)	1.50	4529.26	92.80	612.00	5235.56
THC Wax (Grams)	258.20	4060.90	0.00	0.00	4319.10
Edibles (Grams)	0.00	2153.40	0.00	0.00	2153.40
Vape Cartridges (Units)	0.00	95.00	0.00	0.00	95.00
Fentanyl (Grams)	0.00	9905.00	107.20	276.80	10289.00
MDMA / Ecstasy (Units)	4.00	40.70	50.00	19.00	113.70
M-30 (Units)	80.00	4445.00	12765.00	13076.50	30366.50
PCP (Grams)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Oxycontin (Tablets)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hydrocodone (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Oxycodoone (Units)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Xanax (Units)	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50
Prescription Drugs (Units)	2.00	142.50	160.50	49.00	354.00
Psilocybin Mushrooms (Grams)	0.00	522.20	30.00	0.00	552.20
Other	20.00	8.00	8729.05	0.80	8757.85
Clan Labs / Grow Operations					
Methamphetamine Labs	0	0	0	0	0
Marijuana Grow Operations	0	0	0	0	0
Psilocybin Mushroom Grow Operations	0	0	0	0	0
Money Recovered / Seized	\$4,787.37	\$119,645.00	\$443,437.00	\$32,713.00	\$600,582.37
Money Spent on Informants	\$3,610.00	\$5,304.00	\$2,800.00	\$614.00	\$12,328.00
Money Spent on Drugs	\$53,005.00	\$97,085.00	\$58,260.00	\$83,170.00	\$291,520.00
Firearms recovered	2	55	19	15	91

JACKSON COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE

2022

PRESS RELEASES

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Missouri

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, February 4, 2022

Four Defendants Plead Guilty to Meth Conspiracy Near Elementary School

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Four defendants have pleaded guilty in federal court to their roles in a conspiracy that converted large amounts of liquid methamphetamine into crystal methamphetamine at a rented house within 1,000 feet of George Melcher Elementary School in Kansas City, Missouri.

Jose Vieyra-Lopez, 37, a citizen of Mexico; Megan Eubanks, 40, of Kansas City, Mo., and Victor Suarez-Gallardo, 33, of Kansas, each pleaded guilty in separate appearances before U.S. District Judge Stephen R. Bough on Thursday, Feb. 3. Vieyra-Lopez and Suarez-Gallardo each pleaded guilty to participating in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine within 1,000 feet of a school from Jan. 1, 2014, to May 18, 2018. Eubanks pleaded guilty to participating in the conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. Co-defendant Ruben Ortiz-Vieyra, 42, of Kansas City, Mo., a lawful permanent resident of the United States from Mexico, pleaded guilty to his role in the drug-trafficking conspiracy within 1,000 feet of a school on Jan. 12, 2022.

In addition to the drug-trafficking conspiracy, Vieyra-Lopez, Suarez-Gallardo, and Ortiz-Vieyra each pleaded guilty to one count of aiding and abetting the manufacture and distribution of methamphetamine within 1,000 feet of a school. Suarez-Gallardo, Ortiz-Vieyra, and Eubanks each also pleaded guilty to one count of possessing or using firearms with drug trafficking. Ortiz-Vieyra also pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to possess or use firearms with drug trafficking.

According to their plea agreements, Ortiz-Vieyra supplied methamphetamine to Eubanks. Vieyra-Lopez was the drug runner for Ortiz-Vieyra.

On April 26, 2018, a confidential informant purchased one-half pound of methamphetamine from Eubanks for \$3,000 in a transaction that involved Ortiz-Vieyra. On May 2, 2018, the confidential informant purchased one pound of methamphetamine from Eubanks for \$5,000. Ortiz-Vieyra was also involved in the transaction. On May 8, 2018, the confidential informant purchased one-half pound of methamphetamine. Ortiz-Vieyra and Vieyra-Lopez were involved in the transaction.

On May 15, 2018, law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at Eubanks's residence. Officers seized methamphetamine, marijuana, a Ruger .380-caliber pistol, a box of ammunition, a counterfeit \$100 bill, and drug paraphernalia.

On May 17, 2018, law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at a Kansas City, Mo., residence controlled by Ortiz-Vieyra and Suarez-Gallardo. There were no furniture or other items inside the residence to make it appear occupied. Instead, officers found a black cooking stand that had a pan sitting on top that contained liquid methamphetamine. The residence is approximately 484 feet from George Melcher Elementary School.

Ortiz-Vieyra admitted that he rented houses where he converted liquid methamphetamine into a crystallized form of methamphetamine for sale, including approximately five pounds of methamphetamine approximately one week before his arrest on May 17, 2018. Ortiz-Vieyra admitted that he sold methamphetamine to Eubanks and others. The next day Suarez-Gallardo, who had also been observed at the residence where methamphetamine was being converted, was arrested. Officers found acetone and a Berretta .45-caliber firearm at his residence. Suarez-Gallardo identified Ortiz-Vieyra as the conversion cook. Suarez-Gallardo admitted that he had distributed 10 to 15 pounds of methamphetamine from the conversion lab.

Under the terms of their plea agreements, the defendants must forfeit to the government \$1,080,000, which was received for the unlawful distribution of methamphetamine, based on a sale price of \$600 per ounce and the distribution of 1,800 ounces (112.5 pounds) of methamphetamine.

Under federal statutes, each of the defendants is subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in federal prison without parole, up to a sentence of life in federal prison without parole. The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes, as the sentencing of the defendants will be determined by the court based on the advisory sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors. Sentencing hearings will be scheduled after the completion of presentence investigations by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bruce Rhoades and Robert Smith. It was investigated by the Jackson County Drug Task Force and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Missouri

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

KC Woman Pleads Guilty to Meth Conspiracy

Faces at Least 10 Years in Prison

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – A Kansas City, Missouri, woman pleaded guilty in federal court today to her role in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine after she sold more than three kilograms of methamphetamine to an undercover law enforcement officer.

Megan M. Massie, 32, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Stephen R. Bough to participating in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine from September 2019 to Jan. 26, 2020.

By pleading guilty today, Massie admitted that she sold methamphetamine to an undercover detective with the Jackson County Drug Task Force on 14 separate occasions, distributing a total of 3,436.5 grams of methamphetamine.

Massie was also found in possession of 41 grams of methamphetamine when she was stopped by Overland Park, Kansas, police officers for a traffic violation. She is currently serving a 56-month prison term after being convicted in Johnson County, Kan., of possession with the intent to deliver methamphetamine.

Under federal statutes, Massie is subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in federal prison without parole, up to a sentence of life in federal prison without parole. The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes, as the sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the court based on the advisory sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Maureen Brackett and Assistant U.S. Attorney Mary Kate Butterfield. It was investigated by the Jackson County Drug Task Force and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Missouri

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, April 18, 2022

Sugar Creek Man Sentenced to 10 Years Following Motorcycle Chase

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – A Sugar Creek, Mo., man was sentenced in federal court today for illegally possessing a firearm after fleeing on his motorcycle from a police officer.

William M. Peters, 38, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Greg Kays to 10 years in federal prison without parole. Today's sentence is the statutory maximum penalty for this offense.

On Sept. 2, 2021, Peters pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm.

A Sugar Creek, Mo., police officer attempted to stop Peters, who was driving a motorcycle, on Nov. 15, 2019. Peters attempted to flee by driving through yards and down embankments. Peters attempted to ram a locked gate, causing him to fall off the motorcycle. Peters then fled on foot.

The officer ordered Peters to stop running, at which point Peters stopped running and grabbed a Smith and Wesson .40-caliber handgun with a magazine and five rounds of ammunition from inside of his coat. As the officer drew his duty weapon, Peters threw the holstered firearm and was detained. The officer noted that Peter had a very strong odor of alcohol, but officers were unable to perform standard field sobriety tests due to his combative behavior. Officers searched Peters and found a baggie that contained .42 grams of methamphetamine and a glass smoking pipe. Peters admitted that he used methamphetamine every day and had bought one or two ounces of methamphetamine every day over the prior two months.

According to court documents, Peters also illegally possessed a stolen firearm on Nov. 17, 2020, and illegally possessed another firearm on June 18, 2021, both in Independence, Mo.

Under federal law, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. Peters has prior felony convictions for possessing a controlled substance and for distributing a controlled substance. At the time of his arrest in this case, Peters had an active Sugar Creek warrant for disorderly conduct and possession of drug paraphernalia and three felony Jackson County warrants for drug possession and assault.

This case was prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Maureen Brackett. It was investigated by the Independence, Mo., Police Department, the Jackson County Drug Task Force, the Sugar Creek, Mo., Police Department, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Project Safe Neighborhoods

This case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), the centerpiece of the Department of Justice's violent crime reduction efforts. PSN is an evidence-based program proven to be effective at reducing violent crime. Through PSN, a broad spectrum of stakeholders work together to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in the community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. As part of this strategy, PSN focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and reentry programs for lasting reductions in crime.

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Missouri

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, April 21, 2022

KC Woman Pleads Guilty to Meth Conspiracy

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – A Kansas City, Missouri, woman pleaded guilty in federal court today to her role in a conspiracy to distribute large quantities of methamphetamine.

Sonia Ornelas, 44, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Howard F. Sachs to participating in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine from Oct. 1, 2018, to Aug. 7, 2019.

A confidential source purchased 500.1 grams of methamphetamine from Ornelas for \$3,500 during a controlled purchase on June 25, 2019.

On June 28, 2019, law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at Ornelas's residence. Detectives found approximately 112 grams of methamphetamine, 11 firearms, two cell phones, a video surveillance recorder, drug paraphernalia, and two drug ledgers. Detectives also found \$27,248 in cash, which Ornelas must forfeit to the government (\$2,460 of this was from the controlled purchase on June 25, 2019).

Ornelas told investigators she paid \$25,000 twice a month since October 2018 for methamphetamine (approximately \$450,000 over nine months). At a price of \$7,000 per kilogram, this represents at least 65 kilograms of methamphetamine. A confidential source identified Ornelas as a source of methamphetamine from March to August 2019. During this time, the confidential source purchased one or two kilograms of methamphetamine from Ornelas twice a week, for a total of 44 kilograms of methamphetamine, and paid \$7,000 per kilogram. The confidential source also traded several firearms for methamphetamine.

Ornelas is the second defendant to plead guilty in this case. Co-defendant Adam L. Ragsdale, 45, of Independence, Mo., was sentenced on Oct. 14, 2021, to 10 years and one month in federal prison without parole after pleading guilty to his role in the drug-trafficking conspiracy.

Under federal statutes, Ornelas is subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in federal prison without parole, up to a sentence of life in federal prison without parole. The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes, as the sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the court based on the advisory sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Emily A. Morgan. It was investigated by the Jackson County Drug Task Force, the Blue Springs, Mo., Police Department, the Independence, Mo., Police Department, and the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department.

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Missouri

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, June 16, 2022

39 Defendants Indicted in \$4.7 Million Meth, Heroin Conspiracy

Distributed Over 335 Kilos of Meth, 22 Kilos of Heroin, 140 Officers, 14 Agencies Participated in Takedown, Seized Large Quantities of Drugs

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Twenty Mexican nationals are among 39 defendants indicted by a federal grand jury for their roles in a \$4.7 million conspiracy to distribute more than 335 kilograms of methamphetamine and 22 kilograms of heroin over the past two years.

“This operation took a significant amount of illegal drugs off the street, and disrupted a large Mexican drug-trafficking organization in the Kansas City metropolitan area,” said U.S. Attorney Teresa Moore. “State, local, and federal law enforcement agencies worked together in this Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces operation to bring drug traffickers to justice and protect our community from the violence and other harms that result from the flow of illegal drugs.”

On June 8, 2022, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) led an operation that involved 140 officers and agents from 14 state, local and federal law enforcement agencies. The takedown resulted in the arrests of 31 defendants charged in the indictment as well as three additional felony state arrests. Three of the federal defendants were already in custody at the time of the takedown and five of the federal defendants remain fugitives from justice.

On the day of the takedown, officers executed 16 search warrants and seized 84.4 kilograms of methamphetamine, 4.5 kilograms of heroin, 10.4 kilograms of fentanyl, 7.6 kilograms of cocaine, 10.5 kilograms of marijuana, 687 Xanax pills, 3.1 kilograms of unknown pills, a quantity of bulk cash, five firearms, a 3D printer with manufactured ghost gun parts, and a liquid methamphetamine conversion lab.

“This indictment represents HSI and our law enforcement partners’ dedication to removing deadly narcotics from our community,” said Special Agent in Charge of the Kansas City area of responsibility Katherine Greer. “We stand alongside our community leaders, stakeholders and the public, to continue our work toward a safer community without the significant dangers associated with these illegal substances.”

The 91-count indictment was returned under seal by a federal grand jury in Kansas City, Mo., on June 1, 2022. The indictment was unsealed and made public following the arrests and initial court appearances of the defendants.

The federal indictment charges Jose Jesus Sanchez-Mendez, also known as “Michoacano,” 41, Jesus Morales-Garcia, also known as “Don Jesus,” 43, Luis Eduardo Pineda-Zarao, 26, Juan Bernardo Galeana-Aguilar, 45, Baltazar Flores-Norzagaray, also known as “Sinaloa,” 50, Rafael Perez-Esquivel, 51, Jose Eliazar Valle-Rivera, 39, Uziel Morales-Baltazar, 31, Erick Fernando Martinez Contreras, also known as “Alex,” 34, Joel Enrique Roman, also known as “Pelon,” 44, Miguel Angel Juarez-Lopez, also known as “Chapo,” 47, Jonathan Zuniga-Villafuerte, 30, Sergio Armando Valencia-Ochoa, 36, Juan Humberto Lemus-Mejia, 24, Yuliana Del Carmen Perez Ciprian, 38, Trinidad Torres-Meza, 41, Miriam Veronica Bustos-Martinez, 37, and Liliana Valencia-Mendoza, 40, addresses unknown and all citizens of Mexico; Flor Gonzalez-Celestine, 52, a citizen of Mexico residing in Kansas City, Mo.; and Jose Bernabe Zamora-Cardenas, also known as “Mufa,” 52, a citizen of Mexico residing in Kansas City, Kan.

The federal indictment also charges Tina Marie Cruces, 36, Lisbet Espino, 24, Frank Anthony Valdivia, 43, Melissa A. Bates, 55, and Monica L. McCubbin, 39, all of Kansas City, Mo.; Santiago Raul Mendieta-Sanchez, 41, a citizen of Honduras residing in Kansas City, Mo., Jennifer S. Lawson, 35, of Buckner, Mo.; Felton Stone Jr., 45, Donald R. Moses, also known as “Moe,” 51, Felipe Antonio Alcala, 30, Anthony C. Hughes, 37, Maria Nancy Valdez, 32, Ignacio Barragan-Vazquez, 32, Yvonne Guzman-Carpio, also known as “Morena,” 39, Kongmhink Her, 41, addresses unknown; Marco Antonio Salazar, also known as “Tono,” 29, and Nelson Alirio Garcia-Guerra, 28, both citizens of Guatemala, addresses unknown; Arantxa Sabrina Valderrama-Barros, also known as “Sabri,” 25, a citizen of Venezuela, address unknown; and Daniel Felipe Suarez-Reinoso, 30, a citizen of Colombia, address unknown.

All of the defendants are charged with participating in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine and heroin from Feb. 28, 2020, to June 1, 2022.

In addition to the drug-trafficking conspiracy, Sanchez-Mendez, Zamora-Cardenas, Valencia-Ochoa, Valencia-Mendoza and Suarez-Reinoso are charged with participating in a money-laundering conspiracy related to transporting or transferring the proceeds of the drug-trafficking conspiracy to Mexico.

Sanchez-Mendez and Morales-Garcia are also charged with engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise related to the drug-trafficking and money-laundering conspiracies and other offenses alleged in the indictment. The indictment alleges Sanchez-Mendez and Morales-Garcia occupied a position of organizer, supervisor, or manager of the ongoing criminal enterprise, from which they obtained substantial income.

The federal indictment charges various defendants in various counts of distributing heroin and fentanyl, distributing methamphetamine, possessing methamphetamine and heroin with the intent to distribute, possessing firearms in furtherance of a drug-trafficking crime, being an illegal alien in possession of a firearm, being a felon in possession of a firearm, money laundering, reentry by an illegal alien, and using cell phones to facilitate drug-trafficking crimes.

The indictment also contains forfeiture allegations that would require the defendants to forfeit to the government \$4,718,700, which represents the proceeds of the alleged drug-trafficking conspiracy and criminal enterprise. The indictment alleges the conspiracy involved the distribution of more than 335.5 kilograms of methamphetamine, with an average street price of \$300 per ounce, and more than 22.1 kilograms of heroin, with an average street price of \$1,500 per ounce.

The forfeiture allegations would also require the defendants to forfeit to the government \$277,440 that was seized by law enforcement officers from a vehicle driven by Suarez-Reinoso and \$51,445 that was seized by law enforcement officers while executing two search warrants at Kansas City, Mo., residences.

The charges contained in this indictment are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Byron H. Black, Patrick C. Edwards, and Mary Kate Butterfield. It was investigated by Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Jackson County Drug Task Force, IRS-Criminal Investigation, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, the Kansas City, Kan., Police Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Kansas Highway Patrol, the Independence, Mo., Police Department, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the Minnesota State Patrol, the Olmsted County, Minn., Sheriff’s Office, the Texas Department of Public Safety, the FBI, the Clay County, Mo., Sheriff’s Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the U.S. Marshals Service.

Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force

This case is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

KC Metro Strike Force

This prosecution was brought as a part of the Department of Justice's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) Co-located Strike Forces Initiative, which provides for the establishment of permanent multi-agency task force teams that work side-by-side in the same location. This co-located model enables agents from different agencies to collaborate on intelligence-driven, multi-jurisdictional operations against a continuum of priority targets and their affiliate illicit financial networks. These prosecutor-led co-located Strike Forces capitalize on the synergy created through the long-term relationships that can be forged by agents, analysts, and prosecutors who remain together over time, and they epitomize the model that has proven most effective in combating organized crime. The principal mission of the OCDETF program is to identify, disrupt, and dismantle the most serious drug trafficking organizations, transnational criminal organizations, and money laundering organizations that present a sign

Topic(s):

Drug Trafficking

Immigration

Firearms Offenses

Component(s):

[USAO - Missouri, Western](#)

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Missouri

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, September 22, 2022

Three Business Owners Charged with Wiring Drug Trafficking Money to Mexico

Five More Defendants Indicted in \$4.7 Million Meth, Heroin Conspiracy

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – The owners of three money wiring businesses in the Kansas City metropolitan area are among five new defendants charged for their roles in a \$4.7 million conspiracy to distribute more than 335 kilograms of methamphetamine and 22 kilograms of heroin, and to utilize wire transfers to send the drug-trafficking proceeds to Mexico.

Ana Lilia Leal-Martinez, 46, a citizen of Mexico residing in Overland Park, Kansas, Ana Paola Banda, 50, and Maria de Lourdes Carbajal, 53, both of whom are citizens of Mexico residing in Shawnee, Kan., Javier A. Alvarez, 24, of Phoenix, Arizona, and John A. Caylor, 53, of Kansas City, Mo., were charged in a 112-count superseding indictment returned under seal by a federal grand jury in Kansas City, Mo., on Tuesday, Sept. 20.

The superseding indictment replaces a 91-count indictment that was returned on June 1, 2022; it retains all of the original 39 defendants and charges, and includes five additional defendants and 21 additional counts. The superseding indictment was unsealed and made public today following the arrests and initial court appearances of the additional defendants.

Leal-Martinez, Banda, Carbajal, Alvarez and Caylor, along with all of the original defendants, are charged with participating in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine and heroin from Feb. 28, 2020, to June 1, 2022.

In addition to the drug-trafficking conspiracy, Leal-Martinez, Banda, and Carbajal – who each own a money wiring business – are charged with participating in a money-laundering conspiracy related to transporting or transferring the proceeds of the drug-trafficking conspiracy to Michoacán, Mexico. Leal-Martinez is the owner of Imagen Leal, located at 407 S. Parker in Olathe, Kan. Banda is the owner of La Bendicion 2, located at 2701 S. 47th St. in Kansas City, Kan. Carbajal is the owner of Azteca Imports, located at 11226 W. 75th St. in Overland Park, Kan.

Leal-Martinez, Banda, and Carbajal remain in federal custody pending a detention hearing. The government's detention motion notes that drug-trafficking organizations that generate multi-million dollar revenues are unable to effectively operate without individuals who enable foreign drug suppliers to receive proceeds from controlled substances sold here in the United States. Money sent back to Michoacán, Mexico, further fuels the drug trade and attendant violence in communities in the United States and Mexico. Banda, Carbajal, and Leal-Martinez are citizens of Mexico unlawfully present in the United States, says the detention motion, and thus a flight risk.

In the motion for detention, the government states that investigators found numerous wire transfers that were sent in alias sender names, as directed by another member of the drug-trafficking organization, through these businesses during January, February, May, and June 2022 totaling approximately \$138,914. Investigators believe this represents a very small portion of the actual drug proceeds sent by this organization.

On June 22, 2022, federal agents with IRS-Criminal Investigation and Homeland Security Investigations executed search warrants for evidence of money laundering at La Bendicion 2 and Azteca Imports. A search warrant had previously been executed at Imagen Leal.

The superseding indictment, like the original indictment, charges Mexican nationals Jose Jesus Sanchez-Mendez, also known as "Michoacano," 41, Jesus Morales-Garcia, also known as "Don Jesus," 43, Luis Eduardo Pineda-Zarao, 26, Juan Bernardo Galeana-Aguilar, 45, Baltazar Flores-Norzagaray, also known as "Sinaloa," 50, Rafael Perez-Esquivel, 51, Jose Eliazar Valle-Rivera, 39, Uziel Morales-Baltazar, 31, Erick Fernando Martinez Contreras, also

known as “Alex,” 34, Joel Enrique Roman, also known as “Pelon,” 44, Miguel Angel Juarez-Lopez, also known as “Chapo,” 47, Jonathan Zuniga-Villafuerte, 30, Sergio Armando Valencia-Ochoa, 36, Juan Humberto Lemus-Mejia, 24, Yuliana Del Carmen Perez Ciprian, 38, Trinidad Torres-Meza, 41, Miriam Veronica Bustos-Martinez, 37, and Liliana Valencia-Mendoza, 40, addresses unknown; Flor Gonzalez-Celestine, 52, of Kansas City, Mo.; and Jose Bernabe Zamora-Cardenas, also known as “Mufa,” 52, of Kansas City, Kan.

The superseding indictment, like the original indictment, also charges Tina Marie Cruces, 36, Lisbet Espino, 24, Frank Anthony Valdivia, 43, Melissa A. Bates, 55, and Monica L. McCubbin, 39, all of Kansas City, Mo.; Santiago Raul Mendieta-Sanchez, 41, a citizen of Honduras residing in Kansas City, Mo., Jennifer S. Lawson, 35, of Buckner, Mo.; Felton Stone Jr., 45, Donald R. Moses, also known as “Moe,” 51, Felipe Antonio Alcala, 30, Anthony C. Hughes, 37, Maria Nancy Valdez, 32, Ignacio Barragan-Vazquez, 32, Yvonne Guzman-Carpio, also known as “Morena,” 39, Kongmhink Her, 41, addresses unknown; Marco Antonio Salazar, also known as “Tono,” 29, and Nelson Alirio Garcia-Guerra, 28, both citizens of Guatemala, addresses unknown; Arantxa Sabrina Valderrama-Barros, also known as “Sabri,” 25, a citizen of Venezuela, address unknown; and Daniel Felipe Suarez-Reinoso, 30, a citizen of Colombia, address unknown.

Sanchez-Mendez, Zamora-Cardenas, Valencia-Ochoa, Valencia-Mendoza and Suarez-Reinoso, who were charged in the money-laundering conspiracy in the original indictment, are likewise charged in the superseding indictment.

Sanchez-Mendez and Morales-Garcia are also charged with engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise related to the drug-trafficking and money-laundering conspiracies and other offenses alleged in the indictment. The indictment alleges Sanchez-Mendez and Morales-Garcia occupied a position of organizer, supervisor, or manager of the ongoing criminal enterprise, from which they obtained substantial income.

The federal indictment charges various defendants in various counts of distributing heroin and fentanyl, distributing methamphetamine, possessing methamphetamine and heroin with the intent to distribute, possessing firearms in furtherance of a drug-trafficking crime, being an illegal alien in possession of a firearm, being a felon in possession of a firearm, money laundering, reentry by an illegal alien, and using cell phones to facilitate drug-trafficking crimes.

The indictment also contains forfeiture allegations that would require the defendants to forfeit to the government \$4,718,700, which represents the proceeds of the alleged drug-trafficking conspiracy and criminal enterprise. The indictment alleges the conspiracy involved the distribution of more than 335.5 kilograms of methamphetamine, with an average street price of \$300 per ounce, and more than 22.1 kilograms of heroin, with an average street price of \$1,500 per ounce.

The forfeiture allegations would also require the defendants to forfeit to the government \$277,440 that was seized by law enforcement officers from a vehicle driven by Suarez-Reinoso and \$114,863 that was seized by law enforcement officers while executing search warrants at four Kansas City, Mo., residences.

The charges contained in this indictment are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Byron H. Black, Patrick C. Edwards, and Mary Kate Butterfield. It was investigated by Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Jackson County Drug Task Force, IRS-Criminal Investigation, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, the Kansas City, Kan., Police Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Kansas Highway Patrol, the Independence, Mo., Police Department, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the Minnesota State Patrol, the Olmsted County, Minn., Sheriff's Office, the Texas Department of Public Safety, the FBI, the Clay County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the U.S. Marshals Service.

Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force

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KC Metro Strike Force

This prosecution was brought as a part of the Department of Justice's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) Co-located Strike Forces Initiative, which provides for the establishment of permanent multi-agency task force teams that work side-by-side in the same location. This co-located model enables agents from different agencies to collaborate on intelligence-driven, multi-jurisdictional operations against a continuum of priority targets and their affiliate illicit financial networks. These prosecutor-led co-located Strike Forces capitalize on the synergy created through the long-term relationships that can be forged by agents, analysts, and prosecutors who remain together over time, and they epitomize the model that has proven most effective in combating organized crime. The principal mission of the OCDETF program is to identify, disrupt, and dismantle the most serious drug trafficking organizations, transnational criminal organizations, and money laundering organizations that present a significant threat to the public safety, economic, or national security of the United States.

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Missouri

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, October 21, 2022

KC Man Pleads Guilty to \$4.1 Million Meth Conspiracy

Conspiracy Linked to Two Murders, Distributed 520 Kilos of Meth

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – A Kansas City, Mo., man pleaded guilty in federal court today to his role in a \$4.1 million drug-trafficking conspiracy, which is linked to two murders, and which distributed 520 kilograms of methamphetamine in the metropolitan area.

Gerald Lee Ginnings, 42, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Greg Kays and admitted that between Jan. 1, 2018, and October 1, 2018, he participated with others in conspiracies to distribute methamphetamine and launder drug proceeds, and to possessing a firearm in relation to a drug-trafficking crime, and to being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Ginnings was responsible for distributing, or assisting to distribute, at least five kilograms of methamphetamine. Proceeds of the drug-trafficking conspiracy were used to pay living expenses, buy assets, and to purchase additional drugs for distribution. Ginnings and other co-conspirators used cash during the conspiracy to conceal the true nature of the proceeds from drug distribution.

Ginnings was arrested on June 28, 2018, and again on Sept. 27, 2018. During those arrests, law enforcement officers seized over 50 grams of methamphetamine and a Kel-Tec 9 mm handgun, which Ginnings obtained by trading for methamphetamine.

The drug-trafficking organization with which Ginnings was associated was responsible for two murders. In August 2018, James Hampton was beaten, kidnapped, and transported from St. Louis, Mo., to Kansas City in the trunk of a car. Conspirators also kidnapped Brittanie Broyles, a woman who was with Hampton when he was seized and who witnessed his beating and kidnapping. Ginnings was not with co-conspirators in St. Louis or on the trip from St. Louis to Kansas City.

On Aug. 6, 2018, Hampton's car and body were discovered burning in Bates City, Mo. On Aug. 8, 2018, Broyles's body was recovered by the Super Flea in the Northeast area of Kansas City. She had been murdered by two gunshots to her head. Investigators learned that Ginnings, in exchange for being forgiven a \$5,000 drug debt, was involved in burning Hampton's car. Ginnings was also involved in transporting Broyles after she was brought to Kansas City, during which time someone shot her twice in the head and she died.

Under federal law, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony crime to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. Ginnings has at least three prior felony convictions for tampering with a motor vehicle.

Ginnings is among 22 co-defendants who have pleaded guilty in this case.

Ginnings must pay a money judgment not to exceed \$4,160,000, which represents the proceeds he received from the drug-trafficking conspiracy, as determined by the court at the time of his sentencing. That forfeiture amount is based on the unlawful distribution of more than 520 kilograms of methamphetamine, based on an average price of \$8,000 per kilogram.

Under federal statutes, Ginnings is subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years in federal prison without parole, up to a sentence of life in federal prison without parole. The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes, as the sentencing of the defendant will be determined by

the court based on the advisory sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bruce Rhoades and Robert M. Smith. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, the Sni Valley Fire Department, the Jackson, Lafayette, Buchanan, and Phelps County, Mo., Sheriff's Departments, the FBI, the Jackson County Drug Task Force, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, and the St. James, Mo., Police Department.

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Missouri

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, October 26, 2022

Grandview Man Pleads Guilty to \$4.1 Million Meth Conspiracy

Conspiracy Linked to Two Murders, Distributed 520 Kilos of Meth

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – A Grandview, Mo., man has pleaded guilty in federal court to his role in a \$4.1 million drug-trafficking conspiracy, which is linked to two murders, and which distributed approximately 520 kilograms of methamphetamine in the Kansas City and St. Louis metropolitan areas.

Markus Michael A. Patterson, 39, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Greg Kays on Monday, Oct. 24, and admitted that between Jan. 1, 2017, and September 1, 2018, he participated with others in conspiracies to distribute methamphetamine and launder drug proceeds, and to possessing a firearm in relation to a drug-trafficking crime, and to being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Patterson was arrested on Aug. 30, 2018, at a hotel in Phelps County, Mo. Officers found approximately one pound of methamphetamine (what remained from two pounds of methamphetamine Patterson brought to Phelps County from Kansas City, Mo.), \$8,742 in cash, and drug paraphernalia in Patterson's hotel room and car. The cash seized by officers was the proceeds of drug sales, which Patterson was supposed to return to his source in Kansas City.

The drug-trafficking organization with which Patterson was associated was responsible for two murders. In August 2018, James Hampton was seized by members of the same drug trafficking conspiracy that supplied Patterson with the Phelps County methamphetamine. Patterson was in St. Louis, Mo., with this group when Hampton was seized. Hampton was seized because conspirators thought he could help find the drugs and money stolen by co-conspirator David Richards. When they realized Hampton could not or would not help, he was restrained and beaten. Hampton was then transported from St. Louis to Kansas City, in the trunk of his car. Brittanie Broyles, who was with Hampton and witnessed him being beaten and restrained, was also taken to Kansas City.

On Aug. 6, 2018, Hampton's car and body were discovered burning in Bates City, Mo. On Aug. 8, 2018, Broyles's body was recovered by the Super Flea in the Northeast area of Kansas City. She had been murdered by two gunshots to her head. Witnesses and video identified Patterson following co-defendant Gerald Ginnings, 42, of Kansas City, Mo., in a co-conspirator's car as Ginnings drove Hampton's car to Bates City. Ginnings pleaded guilty on Friday, Oct. 21, to the same charges as Patterson.

Under federal law, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony crime to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. Patterson has prior felony convictions for involuntary manslaughter, distributing a controlled substance, and tampering with physical evidence.

Patterson is among 30 co-defendants who have pleaded guilty in this case and its companion case.

Patterson must pay a money judgment not to exceed \$4,160,000, which represents the proceeds he received from the drug-trafficking conspiracy, as determined by the court at the time of his sentencing. That forfeiture amount is based on the unlawful distribution of approximately 520 kilograms of methamphetamine, based on an average price of \$8,000 per kilogram.

Under federal statutes, Patterson is subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years in federal prison without parole, up to a sentence of life in federal prison without parole. The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes, as the sentencing of the defendant will be determined by

the court based on the advisory sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bruce Rhoades and Robert M. Smith. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, the Sni Valley Fire Department, the Jackson, Lafayette, Buchanan, and Phelps County, Mo., Sheriff's Departments, the FBI, the Jackson County Drug Task Force, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, and the St. James, Mo., Police Department.

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Missouri

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, November 7, 2022

Jury Convicts KC Man of Leading Criminal Enterprise Linked to Two Murders

\$4.1 Million Enterprise Distributed 520 Kilos of Meth

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – A Kansas City, Mo., man was convicted by a federal trial jury today of leading a criminal enterprise linked to two murders and multiple violent assaults, and which distributed at least a kilogram of methamphetamine every day for nearly a year in the Kansas City, Springfield, St. Joseph, and St. Louis, Mo., areas, as well as illegally possessing firearms.

Trevor Scott Sparks, 33, was found guilty of one count of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine, one count of participating in a money-laundering conspiracy, one count of possessing firearms in relation to a drug-trafficking crime, and one count of being a felon in possession of firearms and ammunition.

Sparks has remained in federal custody without bond since his arrest on Dec. 18, 2018.

Sparks engaged in the drug trafficking conspiracy from Jan. 1, 2017, to December 12, 2018. Although not charged, the trial jury heard evidence that the drug-trafficking organization led by Sparks was responsible for two murders and multiple violent assaults. In August 2018, James Hampton was seized by members of the organization. Hampton, who was in St. Louis, was seized because Sparks thought he could help find the drugs and money that had been stolen from the organization. When they realized Hampton could not or would not help, he was restrained and beaten. Hampton was then transported from St. Louis to Kansas City in the trunk of his car. Brittanie Broyles, who was with Hampton and witnessed him being beaten and restrained, was also taken to Kansas City.

On Aug. 6, 2018, Hampton's car and body were discovered burning in Bates City, Mo. On Aug. 8, 2018, Broyles's body was recovered by the Super Flea in the Northeast area of Kansas City. She had been murdered by two gunshots to her head.

Under federal law, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. Sparks has two prior felony convictions for robbery, and prior felony convictions for assault and possession of a controlled substance.

Sparks must pay a money judgment of up to \$4,160,000, which represents the drug-trafficking proceeds, as determined by the court at the time of his sentencing. That forfeiture amount is based on the unlawful distribution of approximately 520 kilograms of methamphetamine, based on an average price of \$8,000 per kilogram.

In addition to Sparks, 31 co-defendants have pleaded guilty in this case and its companion case.

Following the presentation of evidence, the jury in the U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Mo., deliberated for about an hour before returning guilty verdicts to U.S. District Judge Greg Kays, ending a trial that began Nov. 1, 2022.

Under federal statutes, Sparks is subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years in federal prison without parole, up to a sentence of life in federal prison without parole. The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes, as the sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the court based on the advisory sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bruce Rhoades and Robert M. Smith. It was investigated by the Kansas City, and Springfield, Mo., Police Departments, the Sni Valley Fire Department, the Jackson,

Lafayette, Buchanan, and Phelps County, Mo., Sheriff's Departments, the FBI, the Jackson County Drug Task Force, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, and the St. James, Mo., Police Department.

KC Metro Strike Force

This prosecution was brought as a part of the Department of Justice's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) Co-located Strike Forces Initiative, which provides for the establishment of permanent multi-agency task force teams that work side-by-side in the same location. This co-located model enables agents from different agencies to collaborate on intelligence-driven, multi-jurisdictional operations against a continuum of priority targets and their affiliate illicit financial networks. These prosecutor-led co-located Strike Forces capitalize on the synergy created through the long-term relationships that can be forged by agents, analysts, and prosecutors who remain together over time, and they epitomize the model that has proven most effective in combating organized crime. The principal mission of the OCDETF program is to identify, disrupt, and dismantle the most serious drug trafficking organizations, transnational criminal organizations, and money laundering organizations that present a significant threat to the public safety, economic, or national security of the United States.

JACKSON COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE COMMITMENT

Jackson County is a primary market area for production, distribution and abuse of dangerous drugs. Although progress has been made in many areas, continued vigilance, enforcement, treatment and education are required. The Jackson County Drug Task Force will continue its successful tradition through community partnerships and a united, cooperative effort against illegal narcotics.

Although limited by financial and personnel constraints, the Jackson County Drug Task Force will continue to provide the citizens of these communities the professional service that they deserve and have come to expect. The members of this Task Force have made a commitment to this office, the law enforcement profession and the citizens of this community that no information concerning the illegal sales of narcotics will go without proper investigation. With that in mind, we will strive to continue to improve on the quality of service to this community.

The Jackson County Drug Task Force actively solicits tips and information regarding all illegal narcotics activity. Should the information be related to a jurisdiction outside of Jackson County, personnel from this office will assure that the information is passed on to the proper investigative agency. Individuals having information to pass on may contact this office through phone in complaints at 816-655-DRUG or through the TIPS hotline, 816-474-TIPS.