



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Eastern District of Wisconsin*

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Milwaukee WI 53202*

Press Release

September 19, 2017

Twenty-One Defendants Charged in Federal Court with Conspiracy to Deliver Cocaine, Heroin and Methamphetamine

United States Attorney Gregory Haanstad announced today that twenty-one (21) defendants have been charged in federal court with conspiracy related to the distribution of cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine. The nineteen (19) individuals below have been arrested and are in custody:

Luis F. Gomez, age 39
Pablo Hidalgo-Sanchez, age 28
Fernando Reyes, age 39
Mario Esquivel-Sotelo, age 24
Oscar Garnica-Manriquez, age 32
Juan Avina, age 32
Jonathan Martinez-Acosta, age 36
Helder Rodriguez, age 39
Sergio Camacho-Gonzalez, age 20
Ricardo Cervantes-Vargas, age 34
Carlos Flores-Gomez, age 24
Ricardo Rodriguez, age 32
Kristian Yanez, age 24
Luis Torres, age 24
Bryan Banks, age 41
Dante Williams, age 44
Tommie Cole, age 36
Alejandro Casteneda, age 28
Maria Gomez-Gonzalez, age 31

All of the defendants currently reside in the greater Milwaukee area. This case is a part of a long-term federal drug and money laundering investigation based out of Milwaukee. The federal investigation has led to the seizure of multiple kilograms of cocaine and methamphetamine and the seizure of over \$800,000 in United States currency.

The defendants are charged with drug offenses including: distribution of and possession with intent to distribute controlled substances and conspiracy. If proven that the offenses involved more than a kilogram of heroin, and / or five kilograms or more of cocaine each defendant will face up to life in prison, with a mandatory minimum sentence of ten years in prison.

Today, law enforcement officers arrested twenty (20) of these defendants. In addition to today's arrests, law enforcement officers executed 13 federal search warrants in Milwaukee targeting members of this organization. Approximately 200 federal, state and local officers participated in these arrests and searches. Law enforcement recovered approximately 1½ kilos of heroin, two (2) kilos of cocaine, 50 pounds of marijuana, 12 firearms and one assault rifle, \$500,000 in United States currency, six vehicles, a money counter, kilo press and drug paraphernalia.

In making today's announcement about the federal charges, searches, and arrests, United States Attorney Haanstad stated: "The large-scale distribution of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and other controlled substances presents a clear, significant danger to public safety and public health. The pernicious effects of large-scale organizations like this one are not only felt locally, but also extend beyond state and international borders. These charges and this prosecution are the result of an aggressive, coordinated approach to dismantling drug-trafficking organizations, and the United States Attorney's Office is committed to continuing to work with our law enforcement partners to attack these public safety and public health threats." United States Attorney Haanstad specifically commended the local, state, and federal law enforcement officers and units involved in the investigation for their hard work and inter-agency cooperation.

"When we look for the source of the misery and loss of life caused by heroin, fentanyl and other drugs, we need look no further than these and other drug traffickers who profit by exploiting the vulnerable. The dismantlement of multiple large-scale drug trafficking organizations, in partnership with state and local law enforcement and the U.S. Attorney's Office, has big impact and makes the Greater Milwaukee Area safer and healthier," remarked Robert Bell, Agent in Charge of Drug Enforcement Administration operations in Wisconsin.

The investigating agencies include the Drug Enforcement Administration, Milwaukee Police Department, Wisconsin Department of Justice - Division of Criminal Investigation, North Central High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, Department of Homeland Security - Homeland Security Investigation / Enforcement Removal Operations, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Marshals Service, , Wisconsin State Patrol, Waukesha County Sheriff's Department, Waukesha County Metro Drug Enforcement Unit, Wauwatosa Police Department, Greenfield Police Department, West Allis Police Department, South Milwaukee Police Department and the Oak Creek Police Department.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Mario Gonzales.

An indictment is merely the formal method of charging an individual and does not constitute inference of his or her guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until such time, if ever, that the government establishes his or her guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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