

Joint Investigation Between DSP and DOJ Nets 35 in Operation “In The House”

GEORGETOWN, DE – In February 2015, the Delaware State Police and the Delaware Department of Justice began planning an operation designed to proactively impact violent crime in Sussex and Kent Counties. This operation targeted subjects participating in an organized criminal enterprise. Members of this network were active participants in the crimes of racketeering, murder, home invasion robbery, illegal weapons possession, and the distribution of illegal narcotics.

Operation “In The House” was initiated on March 17, 2015. Troop 4 Major Crimes Unit, Delaware State Police Homicide Unit, Sussex County Drug Unit, and the Delaware Department of Justice organized and conducted this operation with the assistance of the Sussex County Governor’s Task Force, Kent County Drug Unit, Kent County Governor’s Task Force, the Delaware State Police Special Operations Response Team (SORT), Drug Enforcement Administration – Dover Field Office (DEA), U.S Marshalls, Delaware Department of Corrections, Dover Police Department, Georgetown Police Department, and the Philadelphia Police Department. During this Operation, investigators used numerous investigative techniques to identify members involved in violent crime and the distribution of large amounts of Cocaine and Heroin in Kent and Sussex Counties.

Through the investigation, detectives were able to establish that Steven Kellam, Rhamir Waples, Richard Robinson, Shamir Stratton, Damon Bethea, and Carlton Gibbs operated in a criminal network that targeted specific victims for home invasion robberies. The victims targeted by the organization were believed to be involved in the distribution of illegal

narcotics. The defendants planned and committed numerous home invasion robberies with the goal of obtaining illegal narcotics and United States Currency from the victims. The investigation revealed that the suspects would conceal their identity by donning clothing items over their faces and then make forced entry into the home of the victims and utilize firearms to commit robbery. During one of the home invasion robberies, two victims were shot and killed and during another, one victim was wounded during an exchange of gunfire.

The below subjects were linked and charged with the following crimes:

- On January 14, 2014, Victims Cletis Nelson and William Hopkins were shot and killed during a home invasion robbery within a residence located on Harmon's Hill Road, Millsboro, DE. Steven Kellam, Richard Robinson, Rhamir Waples, Shamir Stratton, Damon Bethea, Carlton Gibbs were all charged with the home invasion and murder of the victims. Rachel Rentoul and Jackie Heverin were charged with robbery related offenses for assisting in the planning of the crime.
- Steven Kellam, Richard Robinson, and Rhamir Waples were charged with a home invasion robbery that occurred on the 28000 block of Russell Avenue in the Oak Orchard area of Millsboro on May 18, 2014. During this robbery, the suspects pistol whipped a 24 year old male.
- Steven Kellam, Richard Robinson, and Rhamir Waples were charged with an attempted home invasion that occurred on August 22, 2014. During this incident, the suspects kicked in the door of a residence on the 27000 block of Chris Drive in Millsboro but fled as the residents blocked the door and called police.
- Steven Kellam, Richard Robinson, and Rhamir Waples were charged with a December 11, 2014 home invasion robbery that occurred on the 27000 block of Sandy Drive in Millsboro. During this incident the suspects pistol whipped a 46 year old male, and assaulted a 56 year old female.

- Steven Kellam, Richard Robinson, and Rhamir Waples were charged with a December 14, 2014 home invasion robbery that occurred on the 29000 block of Cordrey Road, Millsboro. During this incident the suspects shot and wounded a 37 year old male victim.

This investigation also showed that the above subjects had relationships with several individuals heavily involved in the trade of heroin and cocaine in Sussex County. Investigators were able to determine that Jackson Vanvorst of Laurel operated a large distribution network in Sussex County and employed John Richardson, Ray Revel, and Cornell Smith in the allocation of the heroin. Investigators were also able to determine that Angelina Levan and James Johnson of Harrington were supplying Vanvorst with large amounts of heroin. Vanvorst also orchestrated a large shoplifting ring in which he would send drug users to steal pre-determined items from numerous department, hardware, and groceries stores. Vanvorst would "pay" these individuals with drugs, and he would in turn sell these items for profit in the community.

Investigators were also able to identify several large scale cocaine dealers through relationships with the individuals involved in the home invasion robberies. Australia Mackey of Millsboro was identified as operating a cocaine network in Sussex County and was distributing powder and "crack" cocaine to numerous other large scale drug dealers in Sussex. These individuals were identified as Nathan Henry, Aaron Isler, Myricka Sampson, Leondious Gibbs, Corina Lloyd, Samuel Jones, Jermichael Deshields, and Thomas Deshields. The investigation determined that Tavon Biles of Rehoboth Beach and Zachery Bates of Smyrna were supplying Mackey with large amounts of cocaine. All of the named suspects were charged with numerous drug related charges.

The first phase of Operation "In the House" ended during the first week of May 2015. The operation ended with the execution of 25 search warrants at various locations throughout Kent and

Sussex County. At that time 30 individuals were indicted by a Sussex County Grand Jury. As a result of the investigation the following items were seized: 2,321.7 grams (over 2 kilograms) of Cocaine, 108.03 grams (over 7,200 bags) of Heroin, 7,921.65 grams of Marijuana, .02 grams of Methamphetamine, and 41 prescription narcotic pills. Investigators also recovered and seized \$135,310.00 in United States Currency, 19 firearms and 15 vehicles. Indictments were obtained for the defendants involved in the Murders and Home Invasions on June 22, 2015. Investigations on several related incidents are still ongoing.

The below individuals were arrested for the listed offenses in conjunction with their roles in the above detailed crimes. Not all listed individuals remain incarcerated with Delaware Department of Correction except for the subjects charged with Murder 1st who are held without bail:

- Steven Kellam, 34 of Dover (Photo Labeled with name at the Bottom) – 81 Charges – Murder 1st Degree, Attempted Murder 1st Degree, Racketeering, Home Invasion, Robbery 1st Degree, Attempted Robbery 1st Degree, PFDCF, PFBPP, Conspiracy 1st Degree, Conspiracy 2nd Degree, Reckless Endangering 1st Degree, Tier 4 Delivery of Narcotics, Wearing a Disguise During the Commission of a Felony. Held without bail.
- Damon Bethea, 30 of Pennsauken, NJ (Photo Labeled with name at the Bottom) – 22 Charges – Murder 1st Degree, Home Invasion, Robbery 1st Degree, Attempted Robbery 1st Degree, PFDCF, Conspiracy 1st Degree, Conspiracy 2nd Degree. Held without bail.
- Carlton Gibbs, 40 of Millsboro (Photo Labeled with name at the Bottom) – 23 Charges – Murder 1st Degree, Home Invasion, Robbery 1st Degree, Attempted Robbery 1st Degree, PFDCF, PFBPP, Conspiracy 1st Degree, Conspiracy 2nd Degree. Held without bail.

- Jackson Vanvorst, 34 of Laurel– 55 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Heroin, Tier 2 Delivery of Heroin, Tier 4 Delivery of Heroin, Tier 4 PWITD Heroin, Possession of Cocaine, Criminal Solicitation 2nd, Conspiracy 2nd, Delivery of Cocaine, PFBPP, Delivery of Heroin, Possession of Heroin.
- Australia Mackey, 39 of Millsboro – 62 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Tier 4 PWITD Cocaine, Criminal Solicitation 2nd.
- Tavon Biles, 32 of Rehoboth Beach – 14 charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd
- Zackary Bates, 31 of Smyrna – 3 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd
- Angelina Levan, 46 of Harrington – 15 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Heroin, Tier 4 Delivery of Heroin, Conspiracy 2nd.
- James Johnson, 45 of Harrington – 6 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Heroin, Tier 4 Delivery of Heroin, Conspiracy 2nd
- John E. Richardson, 30 of Georgetown – 7 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Heroin, Tier 4 Delivery of Heroin, Tier 3 Possession of Heroin, Tier 2 Delivery of Heroin, Conspiracy 2nd, Maintaining a Drug Property
- Ray Revel WMN
- Cornell B. Smith, 31 of Millsboro – 5 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Heroin, Tier 4 Delivery of Heroin, Delivery of Heroin, Conspiracy 2nd,
- Thomas Deshields, 36 of Millsboro – 10 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 PWITD of Cocaine, Delivery of Cocaine, PWITD Cocaine, Possession of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd, Criminal Solicitation 2nd Degree

- Jermichael Deshields, 35 of Millsboro – 11 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 PWITD Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd, Criminal Solicitation 2nd
- Nathan Henry, 31 of Georgetown – 12 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd , Criminal Solicitation 2nd
- Leondious Gibbs, 29 of Millsboro – 6 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 PWITD of Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, PFBPP, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
- Aaron D. Isler, 34 of Ellendale – 8 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd , Criminal Solicitation 2nd
- Anthony Hopkins, 53 of Milton – 12 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd , Criminal Solicitation 2nd
- Corina Lloyd, 40 of Millsboro – 8 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd , Criminal Solicitation 2nd
- Myricka A. Sampson, 33 of Harbeson – 12 Charges – Tier 5 Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd , Criminal Solicitation 2nd
- Desirae A. Hammel, 24 of Lewes – 2 Charges – Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd
- Perry Butler, 51 of Greenwood – 6 Charges – Tier 4 Possession of Oxycodone, Criminal Solicitation 2nd, Conspiracy 2nd , Possession of Oxycodone
- Kevin Worrell, 35 of Lewes – 4 Charges – PFBPP, Possession of Cocaine, Criminal Solicitation 2nd, Conspiracy 2nd
- Daniel Godwin, 28 of Georgetown – 3 Charges – Possession of Heroin, Conspiracy 2nd, Criminal Solicitation 2nd

- Angela Brown, 43 of Dover – 2 Charges – Delivery of Oxycodone, Conspiracy 2nd
- Sheri Chalfant, 52 of Laurel – 2 Charges – Delivery of Heroin, Conspiracy 2nd
- Domonique Johnson, 20 of Ellendale – 3 Charges – Possession of Heroin, Conspiracy 2nd, Criminal Solicitation 2nd

Arrest warrants have been obtained for the following individuals in connection with this investigation who have NOT been located

Rhamir D. Waples BMN 03-21-1996 – 81 Charges – Murder 1st Degree, Attempted Murder 1st Degree, Racketeering, Home Invasion, Robbery 1st Degree, Attempted Robbery 1st Degree, PFDCF, Conspiracy 2nd Degree, Reckless Endangering 1st Degree, Wearing a Disguise During the Commission of a Felony

Richard Robinson BMN 08-13-1994– 81 Charges – Murder 1st Degree, Attempted Murder 1st Degree, Racketeering, Home Invasion, Robbery 1st Degree, Attempted Robbery 1st Degree, PFDCF, Conspiracy 2nd Degree, Reckless Endangering 1st Degree, Wearing a Disguise During the Commission of a Felony

Shamir A. Stratton BMN 08-01-1990 – 22 Charges – Murder 1st Degree, Home Invasion, Robbery 1st Degree, Attempted Robbery 1st Degree, PFDCF, Conspiracy 1st Degree, Conspiracy 2nd Degree

Rachel R. Rentoul WFN 01-22-1985 – 13 Charges – Home Invasion, PFDCF, Robbery 1st Degree, Conspiracy 2nd Degree

Jacquelyn Heverin WFN 12-19-1990 – 13 Charges – Home Invasion, PFDCF, Robbery 1st Degree, Conspiracy 2nd Degree

Dean R. Zerden, 47 of Millsboro – 3 Charges – Possession of Cocaine, Criminal Solicitation 2nd, Conspiracy 2nd

Samuel J. Jones, 34 of Millsboro – 12 Charges – Tier 5

Possession of Cocaine, Tier 4 Delivery of Cocaine, Conspiracy 2nd , Criminal Solicitation 2nd

Thomas Tallent, 29 of Georgetown – 3 Charges – Possession of Heroin, Conspiracy 2nd, Criminal Solicitation 2nd

If anyone has any information in reference to the location of the listed wanted subjects, they are asked to contact Sgt. G. Windish at 302-752-3814. Information may also be provided by calling Delaware Crime Stoppers at 1-800-TIP-3333, via the internet at www.delaware.crimestoppersweb.com, or by sending an anonymous tip by text to 274637 (CRIMES) using the keyword "DSP."

Below is a list of statements provided by agencies involved in the operation:

Delaware Department of Justice – Attorney General's Office:

"This operation, and these arrests, are just more examples of the remarkable interagency cooperation in and around Delaware that helps protect the public," said Attorney General Matt Denn. "This is another example of law enforcement agencies working together to take criminals off the street, this time in a major operation in Sussex County. Late last year, a similar effort broke up a major drug ring in New Castle County, and in January, the law enforcement community came together and netted more than a dozen arrests in taking down a Kent County drug operation. My sincere thanks goes out to the Delaware State Police, along with the Dover, Georgetown, and Philadelphia Police Departments, the Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S Marshalls, Department of Correction Probation and Parole, and the Sussex Correctional Institution. I also want to recognize Deputy Attorneys General Martin Cosgrove, Chris Hutchison, and Peggy Marshall for leading the DOJ efforts in this dogged investigation, and securing the indictment."

Delaware State Police:

“This investigation targeted violent criminals and drug traffickers that were part of an organized criminal enterprise operating in Kent and Sussex County. This criminal enterprise was responsible for several serious violent crimes and the importation and distribution of heroin and cocaine throughout the State of Delaware,” said Colonel Nathaniel McQueen Jr., Superintendent of Delaware State Police. “The arrest of these suspects will have a significant impact and will go a long way to improve the quality of life in the affected communities. An investigation of this magnitude requires significant cooperation, communication, coordination and resources for all of those involved. This investigation continues to emphasize the impact and the benefit to our communities when all of our agencies are working together. Thank you to all of the Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies and The Department of Justice for their excellent teamwork and collaboration on this investigation. All of our agencies remain committed to working with our communities to reduce violent crime and drug trafficking throughout the State of Delaware.”