



Department of Justice

David Rivera
United States Attorney
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

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CONTACT:
LYNNE T. INGRAM, AUSA
615-736-5151

TEN INDICTED IN DRUG DISTRIBUTION CONSPIRACY

Four-Year Investigation Nets Majority of Defendants from Robertson County

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – November 25, 2014 – A federal grand jury in Nashville last week, returned indictments charging 10 people with conspiring to distribute more than 5 kilograms of cocaine, announced David Rivera, U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Tennessee.

Armed with arrest warrants and search warrants, local, state and federal law enforcement officers, on Friday, began arresting those charged in the indictment. As of today, six are in custody and four remain at large.

“This indictment should send a clear message to the people of Middle Tennessee, particularly those in the Robertson County area, that local, state and federal law enforcement agencies will come together to rid our communities of drug dealers and violent criminals who think they can operate under the radar in rural America,” said U.S. Attorney David Rivera. “Sheriff Holt has done an excellent job of coordinating resources from law enforcement agencies in Robertson County.”

“This investigation is another example of DEA and our state and local partners working cooperatively to target and dismantle major drug trafficking organizations, operating in both urban and rural areas of Middle Tennessee,” said Michael J. Stanfill, Assistant Special Agent in Charge of DEA in Tennessee. “While these rurally based organizations believe they can operate with impunity due to a smaller presence of law enforcement, DEA and our partners will investigate these organizations with the same type of resources and manpower as those operating in major metropolitan areas.”

In a joint statement, Robertson County Sheriff Bill Holt and Springfield Police Chief David Thompson stated, “The people of Robertson County can rest assured that our local law enforcement agencies will continue to work together with state and federal law enforcement

agencies and the U.S. Attorney's Office, to ensure the safety and quality of life for our citizens. Through our continued efforts, violent criminals and drug dealers will come to learn that Robertson County is not a safe haven for criminal activity."

The charges and those indicted include:

Conspiracy to distribute 5 kilograms or more of cocaine:

Jose Arias Jurado, 55, of Springfield, Tenn;
Felipe Esquirel, age unknown, of Springfield, Tenn;
Abel Conejo, 29, of Springfield, Tenn;
Brian Reeves, 35, of Pleasant View, Tenn;
Phillip Goosetree, 43, of Cross Plains, Tenn;
Marcus Cantrell, 32, of Springfield, Tenn;
James Thomas Johnson, Jr., 34, of Springfield, Tenn;
Antonio Witherspoon, 41, of Nashville, Tenn;
Rene Orozco-Pineda, 44, of Greenbrier, Tenn; and
Salvador Maurico, aka Young Salvador, 23, of Springfield, Tenn.

Possession with intent to distribute 500 grams or more of cocaine:

Felipe Esquirel;
Jose Arias Jurado.

Possession with intent to distribute cocaine:

Felipe Esquirel;
Salvador Maurico.

Possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug crime:

Felipe Esquirel
Salvador Maurico.

Conspiracy to commit money laundering:

Jose Arias Jurado;
Felipe Esquirel;
Abel Conejo; and
Rene Orozco Pineda.

Those currently not in custody and considered fugitives are Felipe Esquirel, James Thomas Johnson, Antonio Witherspoon and Rene Orozco-Pineda. These individuals are currently being sought by law enforcement.

If convicted, those charged with the conspiracy to distribute 5 kilograms or more of cocaine face a minimum of 10 years and up to life in prison. The firearm possession charges carry a mandatory minimum of five additional years in prison. Conspiracy to commit money laundering carries a penalty of up to 20 years in prison.

This investigation was conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the 19th Judicial District Drug Task Force, the Robertson County, Tenn. Sheriff's Office and the Springfield, Tenn. Police Department. Asst. U.S. Attorney Lynne T. Ingram is prosecuting the case.

An indictment is merely an accusation and all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

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