



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
RICHMOND COUNTY

MICHAEL E. MCMAHON
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

130 STUYVESANT PLACE
STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK 10301
TELEPHONE (718) 876-6300

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Ryan Lavis (718) 556-7150
Ryan.Lavis@rcda.nyc.gov

D.A. McMahon and NYPD announce major takedown of heroin dealing network on Staten Island

****** Takedown nets dealers who sold heroin and cocaine linked to overdoses******

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. – Staten Island District Attorney Michael E. McMahon and NYPD Commissioner William J. Bratton today announced the takedown of a drug dealing network that sold heroin and cocaine in and around Midland Beach, as well as other parts of the borough. In total, 6 drug dealers were arrested on felony drug charges. 6 additional defendants were arrested during search warrant executions that yielded quantities of narcotics and related paraphernalia. At least two Staten Islanders who have overdosed this year are allegedly linked to this crew based on information obtained through the Staten Island Overdose Response Initiative created earlier this year by District Attorney McMahon and the NYPD. This initiative allows law enforcement to put names and faces to the many Staten Islanders affected by the poison peddled on our streets and investigate overdoses like other crime scenes.

“This operation signifies another crucial step taken by my office and the NYPD to attack Staten Island’s drug epidemic at its core, and proves that by investigating all overdoses through our Staten Island Overdose Response Initiative, law enforcement can more effectively takedown the dealers responsible for flooding our communities with heroin and other illicit narcotics,” said District Attorney Michael E. McMahon. “I want to commend the NYPD detectives of Narcotics Borough Staten Island for their dedicated work in pursuing this investigation, and my assistant district attorneys who diligently brought the indictments. Far too many lives have already been lost to the scourge of heroin in our borough, but the public can remain confident that my prosecutors and the police will ensure that those responsible for peddling poison in our communities are kept off the streets and put behind bars. We will relentlessly continue to cut off the source of this epidemic and offer help to those who are addicted.”

“These arrests announced today are exactly the kind of results we were seeking when we announced the creation of the Overdose Response Initiative just six months ago,” said NYPD Commissioner William J. Bratton. “At least two overdoses have been traced back to these individuals, who allegedly peddled heroin and cocaine in Staten Island, which has been particularly hard-hit by the opioid epidemic. These early results of the initiative illustrate that the NYPD and its public safety partners are committed to rooting out the scourge of illegal drugs through all legally available means.”

The 6-month investigation began in January 2016 and utilized undercover officers to target a heroin dealing network operating in the Midland Beach area of Staten Island. It was dubbed "Operation Trusted Source" in reference to the nickname of one of the defendants, David "Trust" Ruiz. Other communities where the dealers sold include Dongan Hills, New Dorp, Arrochar, Port Richmond, Castleton Corners, Manor Heights and New Springville.

Throughout the course of the investigation, detectives recovered 634 glassines of heroin as well as quantities of crack and cocaine. It is estimated that this drug dealing network had been grossing approximately \$7,500 weekly in sales.

Almost all of the defendants have had prior contact with the criminal justice system, including RUIZ, who served time in state prison for Robbery 3. Several of the individuals arrested are also associated with the Latin Kings gang.

Arrested Wednesday were the following suspected dealers:

- **DAVID RUIZ**, who allegedly sold heroin and/or cocaine on 8 occasions between Feb. 12, 2016 and July 13, 2016.
- **KATRIN SNYDER**, who allegedly sold heroin and/or cocaine on 13 occasions between February 2, 2016 and June 9, 2016
- **TONIANN LIPARI**, who allegedly sold heroin and/or cocaine on 3 occasions between Feb. 2, 2016 and April 19, 2016.
- **DINA SUGRUE**, who allegedly sold heroin and/or cocaine on 16 occasions between Jan. 19, 2016 and June 25, 2016.
- **ANTHONY JOHNSON**, who allegedly sold heroin and/or cocaine on 2 occasions between Jan. 28, 2016 and Feb. 17, 2016.
- **ANGELA FRENCH**, who allegedly sold heroin and/or cocaine on 2 occasions between Feb. 5, 2016 and March 29, 2016.

Search warrants executed Wednesday at 7 locations (including 382 Burgher Avenue, 299 Midland Avenue, 229 Clove Road and 97 Ann Street) yielded quantities of heroin, cocaine, oxycodone, and marijuana, as well as US currency, scales, narcotics packaging materials, and paraphernalia.

Arrested during the execution of search warrants were: **SANDY FRENCH-SAFAR, DELIAH ALEMAN, JOHN ESTRADA, LUIS NIEVES, KRISSY ESPOSITO and BRIAN GONZALEZ.**

The charges contained in the indictments and criminal complaints are merely allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Sun Moo Heo under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Karen Varriale, Chief of the Narcotics Bureau.

The lead NYPD investigators on the case are Detective Brendan O'Brian and Sgt. Kenneth Tysdal of Narcotics Borough Staten Island, acting under the supervision of Captain Dominick D'Orazio.

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