

DAKOTA COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE

Media Release

Major Narcotics Investigation Capstones with Arrests & Drug Seizures

July 25th, 2012

For Immediate Release

The Dakota County Drug Task Force concluded an 11 month narcotics investigation, code named "Operation Huckleberry." The investigation began as a direct response to the growing heroin problem that has been affecting communities across the entire Metro area, including Dakota County. Over the course of the investigation, the focus expanded to include the illicit sales and distribution of cocaine, ecstasy, and firearms.

On Tuesday, July 24, 2012, the Dakota County Drug Task Force and investigative partners from Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, utilizing more than 75 law enforcement officers, executed 14 search warrants at locations throughout the Metro area.

The investigation and search warrants resulted in the seizures of 1 pound of cocaine, 3/4 pound of heroin, 172 pounds of marijuana, approximately 400 ecstasy tablets, six firearms, counterfeit currency and production equipment, and the recovery of approximately \$10,000 worth of stolen property. The total street value of the seized drugs is nearly \$300,000.

The investigation resulted in federal indictments and arrest of three people who operated as leaders within the organization. Rikki Lee Gilow, age 19, and Eric Michelle Hunter, age 41, both of Bloomington, and Jerry Anthony Harvey, age 38, of Minneapolis, face a range of criminal charges. Gilow and Hunter were each charged with 15 counts of distribution of controlled substances and two counts of using and carrying a firearm during a drug-trafficking crime. Hunter was also charged with two counts of being a felon in possession of a firearm. Harvey

was charged with one count of distribution of heroin. Phase two of the investigation now commences and additional conspirators are expected to face charges in Dakota and Hennepin counties related to their involvement in the criminal organization.

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