

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Larry D. Morse II

ASSISTANT DISTRICT
ATTORNEY
Joseph M. Tresidder



CHIEF DEPUTY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
David Moranda

CHIEF DEPUTY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Harold L. Nutt

2222 "M" STREET, MERCED, CA 95340
TELEPHONE (AREA CODE 209) 385-7381
FAX (209) 385-7473

November 1, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MERCED WOMAN ARRESTED IN MURDER SOLICITATION SCHEME

Members of the Merced Multi – Agency Narcotic Task Force arrested Merced resident Kamalyn Rhea Mason on Tuesday for soliciting the murder of her estranged husband. The arrest came after the Task Force received a tip that led to an undercover investigation of the 41 year - old Mason. According to Merced County Deputy District Attorney Mark Bacciarini, agents posing as hit men negotiated with Mason for several days before the arrest. During the negotiations, which took place by phone and in person, Mason agreed to a price for the killing and advised agents to make the death look like a suicide.

According to Task Force Agents, the solicitation followed a recent attempt by Mason to kill her intended victim by poisoning him with a large dose of a prescription drug. Mason promised investigators cash and a vehicle in return for the murder. She gave undercover agents detailed plans of the intended victim's home, and assisted in writing a purported suicide note.

Task Force agents alerted the intended victim to the plan, and placed him in protective custody. Task Force Supervisor Dean Johnston noted that the intended victim cooperated with the investigation. "While this is an unusual case for our office, which primarily focuses on major narcotics cases, it is another example of what law enforcement can do when agencies work together and share information. Because of this cooperation, we were able to prevent a senseless murder", Johnston said.

Bacciarini praised the work of Task Force Agents John Smothers, Paul Johnson and Merced Police Detective Rod Dash. "These dedicated Officers spent countless hours on this case. The implications of Mason's plan were clear to them, and they took the necessary steps to stop it. This was an extraordinarily dangerous situation", Bacciarini noted.

Mason remains in custody on charges of solicitation of murder and attempted murder.