

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

May 19, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TASK FORCE ARRESTS GANGSTER CRIPS MEMBERS

On Monday, members of the Merced Multi – Agency Gang Task Force (MMGTF), assisted by the State Department of Justice Gang Suppression Enforcement Team (GSET), arrested 15 members or associates of the Merced Gangster Crips. The arrests followed a five – month undercover investigation into the criminal activities of the gang. Utilizing the services of an undercover Officer on loan from the San Pablo Police Department, agents successfully negotiated multiple purchases of cocaine, ecstasy and marijuana, as well as several handguns.

The investigation began when the Merced Police Department learned from State Parole that an MPD Officer was the target of a Crips gang "hit." After the threatened Officer was warned, local MMGTF agents sought the support of other agencies to investigate the threat, and enlisted the aid of the Department of Justice GSET. During the ongoing investigation, an undercover San Pablo Police Officer assigned to an East Bay Department of Justice Narcotics Task Force was injected into the Crips Gang.

Posing as a Bay Area drug dealer, the undercover officer was able to gain the confidence of MGC members, and purchased nearly a pound of rock cocaine, over 400 ecstasy pills, half a pound of marijuana and 3 handguns. His undercover work also led to the seizure of more rock cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana and firearms. Based on the evidence uncovered during the investigation, Chief Deputy District Attorney Mark Bacciarini presented the case to a Merced County Special Grand Jury which returned indictments of 16 people on May 8. The charges include conspiracy, sale of various controlled substances, sale of weapons and criminal street gang enhancements.

The Merced Gangster Crips have a long history of criminal activity in the community. District Attorney Larry D. Morse III noted, "Having prosecuted – with Mark Bacciarini - the MGC gangster who murdered Merced Police Officer Stephan Gray, I know how dangerous this street gang can be. No one, not even members of law enforcement, is immune. This investigation has removed some very ruthless individuals from our streets."

Those arrested were Michael Buddy Barrett, Jr.; Eric Devon Beavers; Antoine Lee Briggs; Jaray Julius Jaso; Sudi Dumaka Johnson; Jose Assencio Magana; Frederick Mays; Patrick McMurray; Lutricia Marie Moore; Damien Ricardo Perry; Denicio Taylor Ramos; McKinley Jabree Sims III; Lester Archie Turner; Randy Lee Tyler, Jr.; and Alejandro Joseph Zavala. They remain in custody in the Merced County Jail, awaiting arraignment and trial.