



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Laura E. Duffy
Southern District of California

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**TWO MEXICAN MAFIA MEMBERS AND 117 SAN DIEGO COUNTY STREET
GANG MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES WITH TIES TO THE MEXICAN MAFIA
CHARGED WITH RACKETEERING CONSPIRACY, DRUG-TRAFFICKING
VIOLATIONS AND FIREARMS OFFENSES**

119 Individuals Charged in Three County-wide Law Enforcement Operations

San Diego, CA - A federal grand jury in San Diego has handed up 17 indictments and the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of California has filed eight criminal complaints charging a total of 119 defendants with federal racketeering conspiracy, drug trafficking violations and federal firearm offenses, announced United States Attorney for the Southern District of California Laura E. Duffy.

United States Attorney Duffy said, "The cases unsealed today make communities stronger and safer. The United States Attorney's Office is committed to an anti-gang, anti-violence strategy built on close coordination between federal, state and local officials. This coordination provides better intelligence about street gangs and violent crime within our communities. And better intelligence means better law enforcement and prosecutions."

FBI Special Agent in Charge Keith Slotter commented, "Today's arrests mark one of the largest single takedowns in San Diego FBI history. The FBI and our law enforcement partners stand unified in our efforts to protect this county from the violence, drug trafficking, and extortion schemes employed by the Mexican Mafia and its affiliates. San Diego is inherently safer today because of the cooperation between our agencies working together to disrupt and dismantle the criminal activities of these dangerous individuals."

"This is a traditional case of dishonor amongst thieves," commented San Diego County Sheriff Bill Gore. "Gangs were made to pay 'taxes' in order to facilitate their trafficking and violent behavior. We answered with a one-two punch: a strong and experienced multi-agency investigation, armed with the RICO statute. The results speak for themselves."

The charges stem from three investigations entitled, "Operation Notorious County," "Operation Carnalismo," and "Operation 12-Step."

“Operation Notorious County”

The indictments are the result of an 18-month-long investigation entitled, “Operation Notorious County,” led by the North County Regional Gang Task force. Eight indictments charging fifty-one individuals, including one charging 40 defendants with participating in a federal racketeering influenced and corrupt organization (RICO) conspiracy were unsealed today. All five indictments were handed up by a federal grand jury sitting in San Diego on January 19, 2012. The RICO conspiracy alleged in the indictment involves the commission of both state and federal crimes, including attempted murder, kidnaping, robbery, extortion, money laundering and drug trafficking violations. As set forth in the indictment, the defendants are members, associates and facilitators of violent street gangs operating primarily in north San Diego County under the auspices of the Mexican Mafia or “La Eme.” The gangs named in the indictment include the Diablos and West Side gangs, based in Escondido, California, as well as the Varrio San Marcos and the Varrio Fallbrook Locos. The individuals named in the indictment were involved in a long-standing criminal enterprise used to extort money by threat or violence. The money was then sent on to high-ranking members of the Mexican Mafia, including defendant Rudy Espudo. The indictment alleges that Espudo is a validated member of the Mexican Mafia who oversees their activities throughout much of northern San Diego County.

“Operation Carnalismo”

In “Operation Carnalismo,” led by the Violent Crime Task Force - Gang Group, a group of federal, state, and local law enforcement agents led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, five indictments charging thirty-six individuals were unsealed today. Eight defendants are charged in one indictment with a conspiracy to conduct enterprise affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity (RICO), violent crime in aid of racketeering (VCAR), distribution and conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine and heroin, and criminal forfeiture. Four additional indictments, charging 28 defendants were also unsealed. These related indictments charge distribution and conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine and criminal forfeiture. All five indictments were handed up by a federal grand jury sitting in San Diego on January 24, 2012 and unsealed today. The RICO indictment charges the criminal enterprise was run by Mexican Mafia member Salvador Colabella. Colabella and his associates conspired to distribute methamphetamine and heroin, extorted and robbed others, and laundered drug-trafficking proceeds. Colabella and his associates collected the extortion payments through the threat of violence and the commission of violence. According to the indictment, the Mexican Mafia has about 200 members, but its reach extends to thousands of Hispanic street-gang members in Southern California. A Mexican Mafia member is the highest level one can attain in the Mexican Mafia. A member, also called “Brother” or “Carnal” or “Tio,” controls, exploits, and profits from the criminal activity conducted by street-gang members and others. This control over the criminal activity is enforced through acts of violence or the threat of violence.

“Operation 12-Step”

This year-long investigation known as “Operation 12-Step,” was led by the East County Regional Gang Task Force, a group of federal and state law enforcement led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department. Operation 12-Step focused on gang-related methamphetamine distribution activities in San Diego County. Today four indictments and eight complaints were unsealed charging thirty-two individuals with conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. According to court records, individuals charged in this investigation belong to nine different criminal street gangs including Varrio Chula Vista, East Side Piru, Old Town National City, Shelltown, National City Locos, Imperial Beach Imperials, Paradise Hills, Varrio Encanto Locos, and National City Block Boys. Between February 22, 2011 and December 13, 2011, law enforcement made more than twenty methamphetamine and heroin seizures in connection with this investigation. In addition, search warrants were executed at eight residences in San Diego, Spring Valley, National City, Imperial Beach, and Chula Vista, California.

U.S. Attorney Duffy praised the coordinated effort of the law enforcement agencies of the Violent Crimes Task Force-Gang Group, the East County and North County Regional Gang Task Forces under the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (“OCDETF”) for the coordinated team effort culminating in the charges filed in these cases. The OCDETF program was created to consolidate and utilize all law enforcement resources in this country’s battle against major drug trafficking.

The cases are being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, the National City Police Department, the San Diego Police Department, the Escondido Police Department, the Carlsbad Police Department, the U.S. Marshals Service, the La Mesa Police Department, the El Cajon Police Department, the San Diego County District Attorney’s Office, the U.S. Bureau of Prisons, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the San Diego County Probation Department, Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations, Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigations, and Customs and Border Protection-United States Border Patrol.

The cases are being prosecuted in San Diego federal court by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Peter Mazza, Jaime Parks, Fred Sheppard and Tara McGrath.

An indictment or a complaint are not evidence that the defendants committed the crimes charged. The defendants are presumed innocent until the Government meets its burden in court of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

“Operation Notorious County”

DEFENDANTS

Case Number: 12CR0236IEG

Rudy Espudo, aka Crazy	Age: 39
Angelina Chavez-Espudo, aka Angel, aka Senora	Age: 49
Pablo Franco, aka Casper, aka Dwarf	Age: 31
Miguel Grado, aka Kieto, aka Kathy	Age: 21
Jesus Barragan, aka Chito	Age: 37
Francisco Gutierrez, aka Bullet, aka Ammo	Age: 29
Oscar Lara, aka Little Troubles	Age: 23
Adan Landeros, aka Lucky	Age: 31
Eduardo Sanchez, aka Ghetto, aka Eric	Age: 28
Ivan Dunayevich, aka Wolfie	Age: 33
Jose Aranda, aka Vicious	Age: 23
Julio Solorzano, aka Mowgli	Age: 20
Gregorio Puebla, aka Froggy, aka Lil Froggy	Age: 21
Hector Fernandez, aka Evil	Age: 23
Arthur Garcia, aka Thumper	Age: 37
Jose Cornejo, aka Rabbit	Age: 21
Jessy Moreno, aka Little Monkey	Age: 20
Gerardo Barajas, aka Knuckles	Age: 22
Enrique Torres, aka Clumsy, aka Klumsy	Age: 37
Hector Garcia, aka Studders, aka Muffin	Age: 20
Jose Ortega, aka Temper	Age: 23
Juan Perez, aka Johnny	Age: 25
Gustavo Barron, aka Force	Age: 22
Armando Barragan, aka Bart	Age: 35
Elvira Esparza, aka Vida	Age: 29
Francisco Zamora, aka Tiny, aka Frankie	Age: 31
Everst Cruz, aka Temper	Age: 21
Daniel Nieto, aka Malo	Age: 21
Fernando Carapia, aka Youngster	Age: 37
Cesar Flores, aka Thumper	Age: 20
Erik Lupercio, aka Scrappy	Age: 31
Jeremiah Figueroa, aka Gremlin	Age: 32
Juana Araiza	Age: 24
Janette Hernandez, aka Puzzles	Age: 31
Ulices Lopez, aka Tony	Age: 23
Tammarra Rivera, akas Tammarra Basulto, Tammy	Age: 32
Tony Garcia, aka Whopper	Age: 40

Cynthia Varela, aka Cindy	Age: 52
Sarah Quintana	Age: 29
Marcelina Reynoso, aka Marcy	Age: 52

In addition to the RICO portion of Operation Notorious County, 11 defendants were indicted in seven related cases for various drug trafficking and firearm offenses. Those cases and defendants include:

Case Number: 12CR0237IEG

Luis Blanco	Age: 29
Charge:	Distribution of Heroin
Maximum Penalties:	20 years in Custody and \$1 million Fine

Case Number: 12CR0238IEG

Ricardo Marta	Age: 24
Charge:	Possession of Heroin with Intent to Distribute
Maximum Penalties:	20 years in Custody and \$1 million Fine

Case Number: 12CR0239IEG

Juan Jesus Rodriguez, aka Buggy	Age: 22
Charge:	Possession of Cocaine with Intent to Distribute
Maximum Penalties:	20 years in Custody and \$1 million Fine

Case Number: 12CR0240IEG

Antonio Moran Herrera	Age: 37
Charge:	Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine
Maximum Penalties:	Life in Custody and \$10 million Fine

Case Number: 12CR0241IEG

Jose Mariano Chavez, aka Pelucas	Age: 32
Raphael Garcia, Jr., aka Vampy	Age: 25
Michelle Patricia Ruiz	Age: 36
Charges:	Conspiracy to Distribute
	Possession of Heroin and Marijuana with Intent to Distribute
Maximum Penalties:	20 years in Custody and \$1 million Fine

Case Number: 12CR0242IEG

Victor Francisco Ruiz, aka Lil Jawbreaker	Age: 19
Concepcion Ramirez	Age: 31
Deborah Sue Allen	Age: 30
Charges:	Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine
	Distribution of Methamphetamine
	Possession of Methamphetamine with Intent to Distribute
Maximum Penalties:	20 years in Custody and \$1 million Fine

Case Number: 12CR0243JM

Francis Ted Morales, aka Teddy

Age: 49

Charge: Felon in Possession of a Firearm

Maximum Penalties: 10 years in Custody and \$250,000 Fine

“Operation Carnalismo”

DEFENDANTS

Case Number: 12CR0290AJB

Salvador Nicola Colabella	Age: 53
Jose Luis Mercardo	Age: 34
Robert Mercardo	Age: 50
Maria De Jesus Claudia Ochoa	Age: 39
Richard Moreno Quevedo	Age: 36
Adriel Madrigal	Age: 33
Silvano Hernandez, Jr.	Age: 20
FNU LNU, aka Pelon	Age: unk

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1962(d) - Conspiracy to Conduct Enterprise Affairs Through a Pattern of Racketeering Activity

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1959 - Violent Crime in Aid of Racketeering

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846 - Distribution and Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine and Heroin

Title 18, United States Code, Section 2 - Aiding and Abetting

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1963; Title 21, United States Code, Section 853 - Criminal Forfeiture

Maximum Penalties: Life in Custody; Minimum Custody: 10 years;

Maximum Fine: \$10 million

Case Number: 12CR0291AJB

Ramon Agredano	Age: 30	
Richard Cornejo	Age: 31	
Dave York	Age: 40	
Guillermo Chaidez	Age: 32	
David Garcia	Age: 26	
Adrian Dominguez	Age: 32	In Custody
Kirk Borja	Age: 39	In Custody

Charles Smith	Age: 45
Patrick Berardini	Age: 63
Anna Sheneman	Age: 30
Esteban Rodriguez	Age: 35

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846 - Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine

Maximum Penalties: Life in Custody; Minimum Custody: 10 years;

Maximum Fine: \$10 million

Case Number: 12CR0292AJB

Juan Guerrero	Age: 34
Jorge Moreno	Age: 22
FNU LNU, aka Tony	Age: unk
Anthony Bascos	Age: 26
Gilbert Marin	Age: 30
Allen Mundell	Age: 30
Brett Youkel	Age: 36
Lacy McElroy	Age: 29

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846 - Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine

Maximum Penalties: Life in Custody; Minimum Custody: 10 years;

Maximum Fine: \$10 million

Case Number: 12CR0293AJB

Alfredo Bazurto	Age: 30	
Charles Monroe	Age: 41	
Jose Pedro Covarrubias	Age: 41	
George Chavez	Age: 31	In Custody
Jose Esparza	Age: 31	
John Atkinson	Age: 29	
Annabel Vasquez	Age: 38	
Deleal Fantajamarie Cajmere	Age: 23	

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846 - Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine

Title 21, United States Code, Section 853 - Criminal Forfeiture

Maximum Penalties: Life in Custody; Minimum Custody: 10 years;

Maximum Fine: \$10 million

Case Number: 12CR0294MMA

Carlos Lozano

Age: 39

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) - Distribution of Methamphetamine

Maximum Penalties: Life in Custody; Minimum Custody: 10 years;

Maximum Fine: \$10 million

“Operation 12-Step”

DEFENDANTS

Case Number: 12CR0286-L

Elisa Alexandra Turner

Age: 25

Manuel Borboa

Age: 35

In Custody

Steve Alex Padilla

Age: 31

Sara Patricia Macias

Age: 26

Nahum Barajas Ramirez

Age: 28

Edward Wyatt Edwards

Age: 53

Daniel Robert Zapata

Age: 42

Daniel Yuhas

Age: 36

In Custody

Pedro Reyes Valencia

Age: 43

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846 - Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine

Maximum Penalties: Life in Custody; Minimum Custody: 10 years;

Maximum Fine: \$10 million

Case Number: 12CR0287L

Marcelo Fonseca Benitez	Age: 39	In Custody
Marta Cecilia Ramirez Cardenas	Age: 29	In Custody
Monica Ann Castro	Age: 43	
Yesenia Yvette Martinez	Age: 21	In Custody
Larry Jiro Yafuso	Age: 51	
Juan Aurelio Lopez	Age: 34	
Alberto Jimenez Barba	Age: 25	
Nora Elizabeth Angulo	Age: 24	
Peter Caleb Auzenne	Age: 29	

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846 - Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine
Maximum Penalties: Life in Custody; Minimum Custody: 10 years;
Maximum Fine: \$10 million

Case Number: 12CR0288L

FNU LNU, aka Pelon	Age: Unk	In Custody
Marco Ramirez	Age: 57	In Custody
Rudy Verduzco	Age: 35	In Custody

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846 - Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine
Maximum Penalties: Forty years in custody; Minimum Custody: 5 years;
Maximum Fine: \$5 million

Case Number: 12CR0289L

FNU LNU, aka "Cabezon"	Age: Unk	
Francisco Hernandez Calderon	Age: 46	In Custody
Javier Rodriguez Hernandez	Age: 37	In Custody

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846 - Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine

Maximum Penalties: Life in Custody; Minimum Custody: 10 years;
Maximum Fine: \$10 million

Case Number: 11CR0056-L

Karlina Irma Gaskill

Age: 20

In Custody

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846 - Possession of Methamphetamine with Intent to Distribute

Maximum Penalties: Life in Custody; Minimum Custody: 10 years;

Maximum Fine: \$10 million

Complaints:

Charge: Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846 - Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine

Case Number: 12MJ0226

Christina Carol Campas

Age: 48

Case Number: 12MJ0227

Edgar Alan Sandoval Deltoro

Age: 34

Case Number: 12MJ0228

Jesus Antonio Lopez Siquieros

Age: 40

Case Number: 12MJ0229

Lisa Annette McCusker

Age: 40

In Custody

Case Number: 12MJ0230

Timothy Joseph Costello

Age: 41

Case Number: 12MJ0231

Harold Hughes Williams

Age: 58

Case Number: 12MJ0232

Nichole Marie Martinez

Age: 33

Case Number: 12MJ0233

Mona Dennise Luera

Age: 30

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