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**INVESTIGATION EXPOSES MANSFIELD  
COCAINE, METH DISTRIBUTION SCHEME**

*Federal, local officials charge 15 in probe*

**SHREVEPORT, La:** United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced today that a year-long undercover investigation resulted in 15 being charged for distributing cocaine and methamphetamine in the Mansfield area.

Federal and local law enforcement officials arrested 12 so far in connection with these charges.

The charges and arrests are part of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) "Operation Limpiar Casa." The Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Desoto Parish Sheriff's Office, the Mansfield Police Department, and the Tri-Parish Task Force which includes DeSoto, Sabine and Red River Parishes, participate in the OCDETF program and conducted the operation.

The defendants face a variety of federal and state charges. Two federal indictments and 10 state arrest warrants to date have been returned.

A federal grand jury returned the first "Operation Limpair Casa" indictment Sept. 4, 2012, charging Bartholomew Claiborne, 25, of Mansfield, with 14 counts of distributing cocaine. Claiborne, who was an elected member of the Desoto Parish School Board, is scheduled to plead guilty to one count of distributing cocaine at 9 a.m. Feb. 7, 2013, in Shreveport. Claiborne faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted.

A federal grand jury returned a second indictment Jan. 24, 2013, charging Laquon Ashton, 25, of Arlington, Texas; Seneca Colbert, 32; Brian Davis, 37; and Janette Ashton, 53,

all three of Mansfield, with multiple counts including conspiracy and distribution of cocaine. Laquon Ashton and Janette Ashton are also charged with conspiracy and distribution of methamphetamine. The defendants each face 5 to 40 years in prison if convicted.

State distribution of cocaine arrest warrants related to the operation were also obtained for Malcolm Flowers, 24; Johnathan McIntyre, 23; Curtis Jones, 27; Dominique D. Sanders, 24; Preston Malone, 32; Roderick Canada, 23; Demarcus Green, 24; Mark C. Harris, 42; Roynell O'neal, 23; and James Turner, 37, all of Mansfield.

Federal and local law enforcement officers began making arrests in connection with the case this morning. There are currently 13 defendants in custody. The defendants facing federal charges had their initial appearances before U. S. Magistrate Mark L. Hornsby at 11:00 a.m. this morning.

The following individuals are still being sought by law enforcement: Malcolm Flowers, Roderick Canada, and Roynell Oneal. Anyone with information as to their whereabouts should contact the DeSoto Parish Sheriff's Department at (318) 872-3956, or DeSoto Parish Crime Stoppers at (800) 505-STOP.

The OCDETF program is a joint federal, state and local cooperative approach to combat drug trafficking and is the nation's primary tool for disrupting and dismantling major drug trafficking organizations, targeting national and regional level drug trafficking organizations, and coordinating the necessary law enforcement entities and resources to disrupt or dismantle the targeted criminal organization and seize their assets.

U.S. Attorney Stephanie Finley stated, "The U.S. Attorney's Office, along with our federal, state, and local partners, is committed to keeping our communities safe. Breaking up this drug distribution ring is a huge step in countering the flow of these illegal substances into the community," Finley said. "I want to thank all the agencies who have partnered with us on this operation and who continue to work to enforce both federal and state narcotics laws."

**An indictment is merely an accusation and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.**

First Assistant U.S. Attorney Alexander Van Hook is prosecuting the case.

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