



Department of Justice

United States Attorney D. Michael Hurst, Jr.
Southern District of Mississippi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2018
<https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdms>

CONTACT: SHEILA WILBANKS
PHONE: (601) 965-4480

Multiple Individuals Indicted Federally in Major Drug Trafficking Operation *"Operation Highlife" Targeted Multi-State Illegal Drug Network Operating in East Central Mississippi*

Jackson, Miss. - Eleven individuals are facing federal drug charges in multiple indictments unsealed on Wednesday targeting a large, multi-state drug trafficking operation in East Central Mississippi, announced U.S. Attorney Mike Hurst, Special Agent in Charge Jere T. Miles of Homeland Security Investigations, Assistant Special Agent in Charge Derryle Smith with the Drug Enforcement Administration, and John M. Dowdy, Jr., Director of the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics.

The indictments unsealed yesterday resulted from an extensive Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force ("OCDETF") investigation dubbed "Operation Highlife," which targeted illegal narcotics distribution in East Central Mississippi. This drug network involved the distribution of over 40 kilograms of methamphetamine, over 3 kilograms of cocaine and over 100 pounds of marijuana. The distribution network encompassed multiple states, including Texas, California, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi.

The following individuals have been indicted as a result of Operation Highlife:

Brandon Deshanta Miller, 32, of Dallas, Texas, is charged with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine, possession with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine, and being a felon in possession of a firearm. If convicted, Miller faces a maximum penalty of life in prison and up to a \$30.25 million fine.

Shandlette Hudson, 42, of Philadelphia, Mississippi, is charged with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine and possession with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine. If convicted, Hudson faces a maximum penalty of life in prison and up to a \$20 million fine.

Dijon James Seales, a/k/a "DJ," 28, of Philadelphia, Mississippi, is charged with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine, possession with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine, possession with intent to distribute five grams or more of methamphetamine, being a felon in possession of a firearm, and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. If convicted, Seales faces a maximum penalty of life in prison and up to a \$25.5 million fine.

Lorenzo Dyrell Hickman, 32, of Philadelphia, Mississippi, is charged with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine, conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute five hundred grams or more of cocaine, and possession with intent to distribute more than five hundred grams or more of cocaine. If convicted, Hickman faces a maximum penalty of life in prison and up to a \$20 million fine.

Latrice Cherrrell Boler, 29, of Philadelphia, Mississippi, is charged with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine. If convicted, Boler faces a maximum penalty of life in prison and up to a \$10 million fine.

Chaddis Demond McAfee, 36, of Philadelphia, Mississippi, is charged with possession with intent to distribute more than five hundred grams of methamphetamine, being a felon in possession of a firearm, and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. If convicted, McAfee faces a maximum penalty of life in prison and up to a \$10.5 million fine.

Courtney Orlando Campbell, 27, of Philadelphia, Mississippi, is charged with possession with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine. If convicted, Campbell faces a maximum penalty of life in prison and up to a \$10 million fine.

Danny L. Drake, 43, of Philadelphia, Mississippi, is charged with possession with intent to distribute five grams or more of methamphetamine. If convicted, Drake faces a maximum penalty of 40 years in prison and up to a \$5 million fine.

Kevin Ashley Wells, a/k/a "Big 50," 37, of Philadelphia, Mississippi, is charged with possession with intent to distribute five grams or more of methamphetamine. If convicted, Wells faces a maximum penalty of 40 years in prison and up to a \$5 million fine.

Jimmie Terrell Harrison, 43, of Forest, Mississippi, is charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm. If convicted, Harrison faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and up to a \$250,000.00 fine.

Tray Beamon, 32, of Louisville, Mississippi, charged with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine and possession with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine. If convicted, Beamon faces a maximum penalty of life in prison and up to a \$20 million fine.

“Illegal drugs are killing our youth, destroying families, and fueling violent crime across our state and our country. I commend our federal, state and local law enforcement officers for coming together to take down this criminal element plaguing our communities. Yesterday’s arrests are a result of the commitment and tenacity that our law enforcement brethren have to dismantling criminal organizations wherever they may be found. Because of this work, our streets, neighborhoods and citizens in East Central Mississippi are safer today,” said U.S. Attorney Mike Hurst.

“Methamphetamine has devastated countless communities due to the dramatic health and public safety consequences that typically accompany its introduction into an area,” said Special Agent in Charge Jere T. Miles of Homeland Security Investigations in New Orleans. “Today’s arrests mark the culmination of an extensive joint effort by HSI, the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics, and the Drug Enforcement Administration to dismantle a drug trafficking organization that decimated parts of Mississippi and Alabama with methamphetamine smuggled into the U.S. from Mexico. This operation is a testament to the seamless partnership between federal, state and local law enforcement, which HSI sincerely appreciates in the combined effort to improve the lives of law-abiding residents throughout Mississippi and Alabama.” Miles oversees a five-state area of operations to include Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana and Tennessee.

“The arrests announced today are another great example of the cooperative efforts between MBN and our federal law enforcement partners to rid our communities of the parasites that try to latch on to our children and family members with the peddling of their poison,” said MBN Director John Dowdy. “As a result of these arrests, Mississippi is a safer place to live, work and raise a family.”

Philadelphia Police Chief Grant Myers stated: “I am really pleased with multiple agencies coming together to work an investigation of this size. This criminal organization is responsible for a significant portion of the illegal narcotics coming into not only Philadelphia but East Central Mississippi as well. Almost all of the crimes we deal with, from assaults to thefts, and everything in between, can be traced back to illegal narcotics. Taking down an organization of this size will have a significant impact on crime in our area.”

The OCDETF operation is a result of a joint investigation by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics. Assisting agencies include the Philadelphia Police Department, Neshoba County Sheriff’s Department, Neshoba County District Attorney’s Office, Scott County Sheriff’s Office, Flowood Police Department, Rankin County Sheriff’s Department, Hinds County Sheriff’s Department, Carthage Police Department, Union Police Department, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Louisville Police Department, Mississippi Highway Patrol, United States Attorney’s Office Southern District of Mississippi and the United States Marshal Service. Assistant U.S. Attorney Erin Chalk is prosecuting the case.

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.

Arraignments are scheduled for tomorrow, June 1, 2018, before United States Magistrate Judge F. Keith Ball at 9:00 a.m. and before United States Magistrate Judge Linda R. Anderson at 9:30 a.m.

A criminal indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, that charge is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

###