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NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
ON SEPTEMBER 18, 2012**

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Investigation Leads to Indictment of Twenty-One People on Gun and Drug Charges

Thirteen Indictments Filed in Federal Court

BOISE – U.S. Attorney Wendy J. Olson announced today that a federal grand jury in Boise has indicted twenty-one individuals in thirteen separate indictments for distributing methamphetamine and possessing firearms. The indictments, which were unsealed by the court this morning, are the result of a long term investigation by the Treasure Valley Metro Violent Crimes Task Force. The investigation began when the task force focused on the drug distribution of the “Aryan Knights” gang. The gang is active both in prison and on the streets throughout Idaho. Through the investigation, law enforcement agents identified Aryan Knight gang members who were trafficking methamphetamine, as well as associates of the gang who were the source of that methamphetamine.

Of the twenty-one individuals indicted, thirteen were indicted for drug charges including four counts of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine, fifteen counts of distribution of methamphetamine, and four counts of possessing methamphetamine with the intent to distribute. Eight individuals were indicted for firearm charges including six counts of unlawfully possessing firearms, two counts of possessing sawed-off shotguns, and one count of transferring a sawed-off shotgun. Two individuals were indicted for both drug and firearms charges, including two counts of distributing methamphetamine and two counts of unlawfully possessing firearms.

Five defendants were arrested earlier today in a law enforcement effort coordinated by the Metro Task Force. Twelve other defendants were already in custody. The four remaining defendants have outstanding warrants. A federal grand jury indicted the defendants in April, July, August and September. James Everette Hood, 40, of Boise, was indicted on April 12; Rory Vincent Palma, 38, of Boise, on July 10. The six defendants indicted on August 14 are Joshua Michael Trent, 31, Christina Shantell Massie, 35, Andrew Gallegos, 23, Jose Silva, 30, Shannon L. Stewart, 41, and Michael P. Duschka, 36; all of Boise. The thirteen defendants indicted on September 12 are Dallas Tyler Thompson, 31, Cameron James Ball, 25, Joshua Michael Nall, 31, Nicholas Andrew Steele, 26, Lisa Rochel Samayoa, 45, Jesse Ray Delgado, 47, Stephanie Ann Robinson, 29, and Dennis Lynn James, 45, all of Boise; Christopher John Solders, 26, and Darin Scott Melton, 44, both of Twin Falls, Idaho; Nina Ann Lucas, 32, of Pocatello, Idaho; Rigoberto Bastrana Carrasco, 36, of Ogden, Utah; and Omar Riveroll-Hernandez, 32, of Long Beach, California. Carrasco and Riveroll-Hernandez are both Mexican nationals.

The charges of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine, distribution of methamphetamine, and possessing methamphetamine with the intent to distribute is punishable by up to twenty years, forty years, or life imprisonment, depending on the amount of methamphetamine involved; fines of up to \$1 million, \$5 million, or \$10 million; and a minimum term of three up to five years of supervised release.

The charge of unlawfully possessing a firearm is punishable by up to ten years in prison, a maximum fine of \$250,000, and up to three years of supervised release.

The charges of possessing a sawed-off shotgun and transferring a sawed-off shotgun are punishable by up to ten years in prison, a maximum fine of \$10,000, and up three years of supervised release.

“Methamphetamine trafficking is Idaho’s most serious drug crime,” said Olson. “The involvement of known gang members and the presence of firearms pose significant danger to our communities. Fortunately, federal, state and local law enforcement are working together to thoroughly investigate and, where appropriate, assist in bringing charges against those who bring this addictive substance and the violence that often accompanies it into Idaho. I commend the Treasure Valley Metro Violent Crime Task Force and Special Assistant United States Attorney Chris Atwood for their detailed and painstaking efforts in producing these indictments.”

The indictments are the result of a joint investigation of the Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF), which included the cooperative law enforcement efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, and U.S. Marshals Service; the Treasure Valley Metro Violent Crime Task Force, a task force comprised of federal, state and local agencies, including the Boise Police Department, Ada County Sheriff’s Office, Caldwell Police Department, Nampa Police Department, Meridian Police Department, and Canyon County Sheriff’s Office; the Twin Falls Police Department, Twin Falls Sheriff’s Office, and Idaho State Police.

The OCDETF program is a federal multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional task force that supplies supplemental federal funding to federal and state agencies involved in the identification, investigation, and prosecution of major drug trafficking organizations.

The charges are being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Christian Nafzger and Chris Atwood, the Special Assistant U.S. Attorney hired by the Treasure Valley Partnership, the Canyon County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, and the State of Idaho to address gang crimes. The Gang SAUSA, although hired by state and local agencies, prosecutes cases in federal court. Those defendants convicted of federal charges are imprisoned in federal institutions rather than state prison, which results in significant savings by the State of Idaho. The Gang SAUSA has indicted a total of 212 defendants in federal court since the program's inception in February 2007. The Treasure Valley Partnership is comprised of a group of elected officials in southwest Idaho dedicated to regional coordination, cooperation, and collaboration on creating coherent regional growth. For more information, visit treasurevalleypartners.org.

An indictment is a means of charging a person with criminal activity. It is not evidence. The person is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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