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City-County Investigative Bureau's Operation Leads to Major Drug Trafficking Bust

Seminole County (April 23, 2024) – Sheriff Dennis Lemma announced at a press conference held today the results of a significant City-County Investigative Bureau (CCIB) investigation called “Operation Black Ice,” targeting drug trafficking activities in and around Seminole County. The six-month investigation, which began in October 2023, began with two-time convicted felon, Floyd Aikens, and his associates involved in what uncovered a large-scale drug and weapons trafficking organization.

During the extensive investigation, CCIB agents uncovered a sophisticated operation responsible for distributing a range of illicit substances including Fentanyl, Heroin, Xylazine, Methamphetamine, Cocaine, Crack Cocaine, and N-dimethylpentylone (MDPV or "Molly"). The group was also engaged in smuggling marijuana into Florida from other states and allegedly conspiring to commit murder. They would also sell high-powered firearms including three machine guns, 11 rifles, and nine handguns.

The investigation, conducted in multiple phases, involved undercover agents making controlled purchases of drugs and firearms from Aikens and his associates. Due to the magnitude of Fentanyl sales, the Sheriff's Office secured funding from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's SAFE Program (State Assistance for Fentanyl Eradication), a program funded by the Florida Legislature and Governor DeSantis. The money provided through SAFE enables law enforcement to conduct continuous and comprehensive operation targeting fentanyl-related drug trafficking networks.

Key findings from the investigation include:

- 24 undercover purchases totaling over \$160,000, including significant quantities of Fentanyl (four pounds), Heroin (three pounds), Methamphetamine (five pounds), Molly (four and a half pounds), Xylazine (14 grams), marijuana (200 grams) and ten firearms.
- Seizure of 18.5 kilograms (over 40 pounds) of cocaine and 13 additional firearms from a residence associated with the investigation.
- Prevention of a potential murder-for-hire plot against an inmate through collaboration with prison officials, and the interception of a drone operation aimed at smuggling contraband into a correctional facility, resulting in the arrest of two individuals in Jackson County, Florida.
- The arrest of a UPS distribution manager, who would intercept packages of drugs with fake addresses and personally deliver them to individuals involved with this investigation.

Today, Phase 2 of the operation saw the execution of six residential search warrants and the arrest of numerous suspects across Seminole (five) and Orange Counties (one). This coordinated effort involved multiple law enforcement agencies, including the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, municipal police departments throughout Seminole County, the State Attorney's Office, 18th Judicial Circuit, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Alcohol Tobacco & Firearms (ATF), the US Marshals Service (USMS), the Orange County Sheriff's Office, and Volusia Sheriff's Office.

Of the 33 identified suspects, 20 have been apprehended as a result of this operation, with 13 currently outstanding. Phase 3 will involve continued investigation to gather additional evidence and identify potential co-defendants.

"For years, we have emphasized that we cannot arrest our way out of the drug epidemic facing our country, but we also must hold drug dealers accountable to the fullest extent of the law. This scale of this investigation exemplifies the importance of collaboration among law enforcement agencies and underscores our commitment to tackling illicit narcotics on our streets, especially Fentanyl and the associated organized crime," stated Sheriff Lemma. "I extend my gratitude to the local, state, and federal partners and the Seminole County State Attorney's Office for their crucial support. The success of this operation highlights the impact of initiatives like the SAFE Program in combatting drug-related crime."

CCIB is a multi-jurisdictional task force comprised of agents from SCSO, and Altamonte Springs, Lake Mary, Longwood, and Sanford Police Departments, dedicated to combating complex criminal enterprises across Seminole County through strategic partnerships and coordinated investigations.

A video of Sheriff Lemma's briefing, and case-related photos can be found here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/07c956ytoqyeq439bb16q/Alx68w87eT6eEzx9dF-DEBA?rlkey=tio5pwprzhi9ula0i4chbywo&st=7xmvrkqq&dl=0>

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