



# Department of Justice

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## **FEDERAL OFFICER INDICTED FOR SMUGGLING GUNS AND MONEY IN THE AIRPORT — 13 OTHERS INDICTED FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING**

### ***“Operation Rude Beast” Leads To One of the Largest Ecstasy Pill Seizures in the United States and Charges in Multiple Criminal Schemes***

ATLANTA, GA -- United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates, along with representatives of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies who make up the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) that conducted the investigation, announced at a news conference today that a federal Customs officer based at Atlanta’s Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport has been arrested and charged along with 13 others for alleged drug trafficking in a large-scale investigation code-named “Operation Rude Beast.” Five search warrants were executed in the last 24 hours at locations in metro Atlanta as part of the investigation.

“The indictment charges a Customs and Border Protection agent at the airport with taking payoffs to smuggle guns and drug money from undercover agents posing as international drug traffickers,” said Ms. Yates. “That investigation led to unraveling a large scale ecstasy trafficking organization and the seizure of over \$2.8 million worth of ecstasy from a house in Chamblee—one of the largest seizures in the country. ”

DEA Atlanta Special Agent in Charge Rodney G. Benson said, “The Drug Enforcement Administration is dedicated to working with federal, state and local law enforcement through the OCDETF program, not only to rid the streets of drugs, but to also to ensure the integrity of those who dedicate their lives to protecting the citizens of the United States. Today's arrests show the continuing efforts by law enforcement to combat corruption and dismantle a major drug organization.”

“Today's indictment reflects the outstanding law enforcement cooperation in this case that unmasked the illicit acts of a CBP officer,” said David P. D'Amato, Special Agent in Charge of the ICE Office of Professional Responsibility for the Southeast. “The law enforcement community here in Atlanta and around the country are committed to weeding

out those whose acts tarnish the image of the many officers and agents who work tirelessly to keep our communities and country safe.”

In Jamaica, Assistant Police Commissioner Justin Felice of the Jamaican Constabulary Force, Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) said, “This case demonstrates the strong partnership between law enforcement agencies in the United States and Jamaica to combat corruption and bring those who would tarnish their public oaths to uphold the law to justice. The citizens of all countries need to know international cooperation between U.S. law enforcement agencies and the ACB is essential to reduce levels of transnational crime and maintain public confidence with law enforcement. Integrity is non-negotiable.”

“This investigation demonstrates the effectiveness and commitment of law enforcement agencies to prevent drugs from continuing to infiltrate our communities. The multi-jurisdictional cooperation exhibited in this investigation is evidence that pooled resources can make significant inroads in identifying and prosecuting individuals violating the law,” said DeKalb County Police Chief William O'Brien.

CBP Director of Field Operations Robert Gomez said, “Vigilance, Service to Country and Integrity are the core values central to carrying out our mission. One corrupt officer is too many. I applaud the great cooperation of all agencies who worked this case.”

IRS Criminal Investigation Special Agent in Charge Reginael D. McDaniel said, “The indictments handed down on Operation Rude Beast are another testament to what can be accomplished when all levels of law enforcement work together. Allegations involving the laundering of drug proceeds constitute a serious threat to our community, to the integrity of our financial system, as well to our national security.”

A federal grand jury has returned three indictments related to “Operation Rude Beast,” which were all unsealed on Thursday, December 16, 2010.

In the first indictment, the following individuals were charged with offenses including conspiring to launder drug money, bulk cash smuggling, and attempting to bring weapons onto an aircraft:

1. DEVON SAMUELS, a/k/a “Smokey,” 45, a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer, of Stockbridge, Georgia;
2. MARK TOMLINSON, a/k/a “Supa,” 36, of Stone Mountain, Georgia; and
3. KEISHA JONES, a/k/a “Platinum,” 30, a Delta employee, of Stockbridge, Georgia.

In the second indictment, the following individuals were charged with offenses including conspiracy to traffic MDMA (ecstasy) and marijuana, and firearms violations:

1. JEROME BUSHAY, a/k/a "Romey," 32, of Norcross, Georgia;
2. FNU LNU, a/k/a "Otis," age and place of residence unknown;
3. CHRISTOPHER DIXON, a/k/a "Yardman," 37, of Lithonia, Georgia;
4. MARK TOMLINSON, a/k/a "Supa," 36, of Stone Mountain, Georgia;
5. ROSHAUN HOOD, a/k/a "Shaun," 29, of Atlanta, Georgia;
6. CURTIS HERNANDEZ, a/k/a "Kurt Hernandez," 38, of Decatur, Georgia;
7. NIGEL EDWARDS, a/k/a "Nigel the Barber," 33, of Stone Mountain, Georgia;
8. JERMAINE CAMPBELL, a/k/a "Fatman," 30, of DeKalb County, Georgia;
9. RICARDO DUNCAN, a/k/a "Ricky," 27, of Lithonia, Georgia;
10. DAVE GRANT, a/k/a David Clarke, a/k/a "Scratchy," age unknown, of Lithonia, Georgia;
11. CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS, a/k/a "Eric Washington," "Bobby," "Beagle," and "Apachee," 33, of Snellville, Georgia;
12. DAMIEN AARONS, a/k/a "Damage," 35, of Covington, Georgia; and
13. FNU LNU, a/k/a "Fowley," age and place of residence unknown.

In the third indictment, the following individuals were charged with offenses including conspiracy to commit marriage fraud and making false statements on immigration documents:

14. DEVON SAMUELS, a/k/a "Smokey," 45, of Stockbridge, Georgia;
15. CARLTON FERGUSON, a/k/a "Fergie," 35, of Decatur, Georgia; and
16. DAHLIA MCLAREN, a/k/a "Dahlia McLaren Ferguson," 29, of Decatur, Georgia.

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges, and other information presented in court: In November 2010, SAMUELS, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer, was charged in connection with three undercover sting operations to smuggle alleged drug money and guns through Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

On November 3, 2010, an undercover officer, posing as a drug money launderer, gave SAMUELS approximately \$22,000 in money represented to be from the sale of drugs. With the alleged assistance of his associate, TOMLINSON, and by unlawfully utilizing his badge to bypass security and avoid screening, SAMUELS smuggled the money through Atlanta's airport to Jamaica. Once in Jamaica, SAMUELS delivered the money to a Jamaican undercover police officer who was posing as an international drug trafficker.

SAMUELS is charged with accepting \$50,000 on November 19, 2010, in alleged drug money from another undercover officer. SAMUELS and KEISHA JONES (his wife, a Delta Air Lines employee) then traveled from Atlanta to Jamaica, where SAMUELS and JONES

delivered the money to Jamaican undercover police officers. The indictment alleges that while in Atlanta's airport, SAMUELS unlawfully used his badge to bypass security and avoid being screened.

SAMUELS is charged with accepting five firearms and approximately \$20,000 in alleged drug money from an undercover police officer on November 30, 2010. SAMUELS went directly to the airport with the firearms and money and unlawfully used his badge to bypass security again, smuggling the money and guns into the airport. Once inside the airport, SAMUELS allegedly gave the firearms and money to a second undercover officer who told SAMUELS that he was going to transport the firearms and money to Arizona for a meeting with members of a Mexican drug cartel.

The indictment also alleges that on several occasions, SAMUELS unlawfully used his access to government computers to determine whether he or his associates were under federal investigation. SAMUELS allegedly ran a computer check on an individual involved in a separate drug investigation named JEROME BUSHAY.

In a related investigation beginning in approximately February 2010, federal law enforcement officers began investigating a specific MDMA (ecstasy) and marijuana drug trafficking organization operating in the metro Atlanta area and elsewhere. This organization was led by JEROME BUSHAY and an individual known only as "OTIS." BUSHAY and OTIS allegedly used several distributors, brokers, and couriers to facilitate their drug distribution, including: DAMIEN AARONS, MARK TOMLINSON, CURTIS HERNANDEZ, CHRISTOPHER DIXON, RICARDO DUNCAN, CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS, and ROSHAUN HOOD. These individuals then distributed the drugs to various individuals throughout the United States. On October 1, 2010, pursuant to a search warrant, law enforcement officers seized approximately 700,000 tablets of ecstasy in one of the largest domestic seizures of MDMA (ecstasy) in U.S. history. The tablets were seized at a house at 1855 8<sup>th</sup> Street, in Chamblee, Georgia. Agents found the pills hidden in various places throughout the house, including in the insulation of the walls and in a crawl space near a bedroom. Those tablets have been held for evidence by the DEA. The street value of the ecstasy is estimated at \$2.8 million.

The OCDETF agents and prosecutors investigating the alleged criminal activity by SAMUELS began to follow evidence of the officer allegedly using his position to further a marriage fraud scheme. Beginning in November 2009, and in exchange for a fee, SAMUELS allegedly used his knowledge of immigration practices to assist CARLTON FERGUSON and DAHLIA MCLAREN in deceiving U.S. immigration authorities into believing that FERGUSON's and MCLAREN's sham marriage was genuine. Further investigation revealed that FERGUSON and MCLAREN married simply so that MCLAREN could obtain United States citizenship. The indictment alleges that SAMUELS was paid at least \$500 for his assistance in that scheme.

The indictments also contain forfeiture provisions seeking to forfeit any and all ill-gotten gains from the criminal activity, including properties, vehicles, and weapons:

1. 6746 Grey Rock Way, Lithonia, Georgia;
2. 4425 Amy Drive, Snellville, Georgia;
3. A 2001 Ford Explorer Sport Trac;
4. A blue 2007 Audi Q7, 4.2 Quattro Prem S-line;
5. A silver 2007 Mercedes Benz S550;
6. A white 2007 Audi Q7; and
7. One Springfield XD-40 .40 caliber handgun one Glock 26 handgun.

The investigation and prosecution of this case is a coordinated effort through the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force which is comprised of Special Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA); U.S. Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE), Office of Professional Responsibility and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI); U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Office of Inspector General (OIG); Anti-Corruption Branch, Jamaican Constabulary Force; DeKalb County Police Department; U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Field Operations; Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation; and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs ( I.N.L.) U. S. State Department; and the United States Marshal Service, with assistance from Delta Air Lines Corporate Security.

Assistant United States Attorneys Jeffrey W. Davis, Cassandra Schansman, L. Skye Davis, and Michael J. Brown are prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is [www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan).