



Department of Justice

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ATLANTA, GA -United States Attorney David E. Nahmias of the Northern District of Georgia, along with Sherri Strange, Special Agent In Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration, and a partnership of law enforcement, education and health officials commemorated "National Methamphetamine Awareness Day," by announcing at a news conference at the State Capitol a unique approach to getting out the message of the dangers of methamphetamine. Using the efforts and technologies of Georgia's higher education institutions, thousands of students in both public and private colleges in the state will receive an e-mail discussing the lethal dangers of meth and how people can find out more and get help if they need it.

The United States Attorney and DEA-Atlanta Special Agent In Charge Sherri Strange were joined at the news conference by Chris Ash, Assistant Director, Georgia Bureau of Investigation; Harold E. Wade President, Atlanta Metropolitan College; Tim Hynes, President, University of West Georgia, both representing public universities and colleges coordinated by the Georgia Board of Regents and the Chancellor's Office; Dr. Henry Hector, Georgia Foundation for Independent Colleges, representing many of Georgia's private colleges; Phil Hulst, Director of Learning Support, Georgia Department of Education; Dr. Brenda Rowe, Director of Prevention Services, Georgia Department of Human Services; and Becky Vaughn, President, Georgia Council on Substance Abuse, all of whom made brief statements, and other law enforcement, health and education officials. These partners in the project and their agencies are volunteering their efforts to get the emails out to thousands of Georgia students.

United States Attorney Nahmias said, "Thousands of Georgia college students will get a specific e-mail that very clearly shows them the dangers of meth and what they can do to find out more and to get help if they need it. We are finding huge amounts of meth being transported into Georgia by Mexican drug cartels, and mounting evidence of more meth use here in the state. We are putting meth traffickers in federal prison, but educating people about the dangers of meth and preventing meth use is just as important. Today's effort is an extraordinary partnership that will take a simple e-mail and distribute it to a

key demographic group that needs to get the message, not just on Meth Awareness Day, but for the rest of their lives. Meth is that dangerous.”

DEA Special Agent In Charge Sherri Strange said at the news conference, “‘Mothers Against Meth’ tells us that meth use in Georgia is five times the national average and because meth is one of the most dangerous drugs being abused today, we cannot become numb to the issue because it is yesterday's news. Law enforcement continues to seize record amounts of meth which means that someone is still buying and abusing this extremely powerful stimulant. If, through the media and the e-mails being sent out to college students, we can prevent Georgians from ever starting down the road to meth addiction, we have won half the battle.”

Dr. Harold E. Wade, President, Atlanta Metropolitan College, said, “Speaking on behalf of the University System of Georgia, we are pleased that the U.S. Department of Justice is undertaking this valuable public service and we are happy to assist in spreading the word. As part of this awareness effort, the University System of Georgia will be distributing via technology a message to each of our 260,000 students on our 35 campuses across Georgia. We want students to be aware of the dangers of this highly addictive drug.” The Georgia Foundation for Independent Colleges, representing 25 traditional independent colleges including 60,000 students, is also fully participating in the effort, as is Emory University, the state’s largest private university, with over 12,000 students.

Recognizing the criminal, health, social and economic effects of meth and in particular its effect on young people, this coalition of law enforcement, education and government leaders are targeting college-age students with the e-mail. The e-mail shows graphic pictures of the effect of meth on the body. (NEWS MEDIA NOTE: the e-mail is attached for publication). The e-mail is also available to any and all school systems.

As part of National Methamphetamine Awareness Day, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales is hosting a national event with federal, state, local and community leaders to discuss the broader impact that meth production and use is having on our communities. Across the nation, U.S. Attorneys, along with federal, state and local leaders, are coordinating a variety of educational events targeting their specific communities. Education and public outreach are at the heart of the National Drug Control Strategy, and the Justice Department and its partners hope National Methamphetamine Awareness Day will play an important role in highlighting the nationwide efforts to increase awareness of and decrease demand for this highly addictive and dangerous drug.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), 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.