



# Department of Justice

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## **“OPERATION OMNIPRESENCE” RESULTS IN NARCOTICS ARRESTS AND MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR SEIZURES**

Atlanta, GA - A major drug-trafficking organization whose distribution operations were centered in Atlanta but spread across the nation has been dismantled through a series of federal arrests and the seizure of over \$6 million in currency and property, the United States Attorney's Office announced today. These enforcement actions successful conclude "Operation Omnipresence," a multi-agency investigation.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said of the case, "The agencies involved in this complex investigation should be commended for their skill and diligence in dismantling a major drug-dealing organization. Operation Omnipresence has cut off the flow of large amounts of poison to the streets of Atlanta and other communities in Georgia and across the country."

DEA Atlanta Special Agent In Charge Sherri Strange said, "Operation Omnipresence has been a patient and thorough investigation that exposed the hierarchy and management structure of a major drug trafficking organization operating throughout the United States. Like an onion, the multiple layers within were revealed as the case was cut wide open. This multi-agency cooperative effort will greatly impact the Atlanta metro area as an organization responsible for moving thousands of kilograms of cocaine through Atlanta is dismantled. Law enforcement is at its best when we combine our assets, unite and stand strong against those who try to poison our communities."

FBI Atlanta Special Agent In Charge Greg Jones said of Operation Omnipresence, "The conclusion of this operation has left Atlanta, its surrounding communities, and beyond, a safer place. Members of this group displayed a complete disregard for the law as well as its officers and agents who enforce it. These members further displayed a complete disregard for how this large scale drug trafficking activity would affect the lives of other individuals in the community."

Beginning in August 2004, DEA-Atlanta, Task Force Group 3, initiated what would eventually become a multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional investigation into a drug

trafficking organization responsible for the distribution of thousands of kilograms of cocaine throughout the United States. Soon after the inception of the investigation, the Federal Bureau of Investigation began a parallel investigation into the drug-trafficking organization, targeting another major drug cell operating in Atlanta. The overall investigation was designated “Operation Omnipresence.”

The investigation discovered that this drug-trafficking organization centered its distribution network initially in Atlanta and eventually expanded into an organization operating in Georgia, Arizona, California, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Florida, and Mexico. The investigation revealed that the cocaine was being shipped from Mexico to designated cities utilizing clandestine methods, such as religious statues as found in New York City. After the organization disposed of the narcotics, millions of dollars in United States currency were shipped back to Mexico.

The investigation resulted in the seizure of over 700 kilograms of cocaine, valued at approximately \$15 million, approximately \$3 million in United States currency, and \$3 million in assets. Twenty-two individuals have been indicted by a federal grand jury in Atlanta for their participation in the crimes. These defendants are currently charged with conspiring to distribute cocaine and face potential penalties of up to life in prison.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment contains only allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

(NEWS MEDIA NOTE: individual charges and public record charging documents are available upon request through the Public Affairs Office.)

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