May 16, 2019

**Contact** Kylie Mason

**Phone** 850-245-0150

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

# Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

## Opioids Seized in Shutdown of Drug Trafficking Operation

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody and Volusia County Sheriff Michael Chitwood today announced the arrests of eight individuals, dismantling a massive drug trafficking operation responsible for trafficking heroin, fentanyl and cocaine. Authorities of the Volusia County Sheriff's Office seized 37 grams of heroin and fentanyl, 16 grams of cocaine, 20 guns, $300,000 in cash and three cars. Independent sources identified the drug trafficking organization as being responsible for the distribution of multiple kilograms of heroin and cocaine monthly in Volusia County. A total of 21 arrest warrants and nine search warrants were issued because of the investigation. Additional arrests are expected in the future.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "The members of this massive drug trafficking ring thought they were clever enough to get away with selling deadly opioids to Floridians, but they couldn't outsmart Sheriff Chitwood's Deputies and our Statewide Prosecutors. This is the second massive opioid takedown on Florida's East Coast this month, and these arrests should serve as a strong warning to anyone trying to sell poison to Floridians—that we will catch you and you will pay for your crimes."

Volusia County Sheriff Michael Chitwood said, "You're talking 3 kilos of heroin, fentanyl and cocaine hitting our streets on a weekly basis. These clowns are out there murdering people with the poison they're dealing, because human life is cheap on the streets. It's imperative that the community continues to funnel information to us. It's imperative, because we're only as good as the information you give us."

In early 2018, the Volusia Bureau of Investigation along with the East Volusia Narcotics Task Force began a multi-jurisdictional investigation into a heroin and cocaine distribution organization led by Marcel Green. The ringleader and other suspects distributed and sold multiple kilograms of heroin and cocaine in east Volusia County. It is believed that the members were supplied with multiple kilograms of heroin and cocaine by a source from South Florida. Today, the South Florida High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area task force conducted a traffic stop on Kenneth Rowell of Pembroke Pines, and discovered narcotics in the suspect's vehicle. Rowell faces trafficking conspiracy charges from VBI in addition to any charges in South Florida.

The identified members of the organization compiled significant criminal histories for numerous crimes, including narcotics violations and violent crimes against persons. All combined, the criminal histories of those connected to the organization total more than 300 felony charges and 124 felony convictions. It's also believed the organization is connected to multiple overdose deaths that remain under active investigation by the VCSO's Major Case Unit.

VCSO arrested the following individuals in connection with the drug trafficking operation:

· Jessica Gorman, 26, Deltona
· Marcel Green, 31, Daytona Beach
· Robert Hamilton Jr., 34, Ormond Beach
· Karlee Harbst, 27, Port Orange
· Michael Jolly, 45, Daytona Beach
· John Organ, 33, Palm Coast
· Lee Wiley II, 42, Daytona Beach
· Mavis Williams, 41, Daytona Beach

Attorney General Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution contributed to the efforts of the VBI's multi-jurisdictional investigation. The Volusia County Sheriff's Office, Department of Homeland Security Investigations, the Office of the Central Florida High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, Daytona Beach Police Department, Daytona Beach Shores Department of Public Safety, DeLand Police Department, Edgewater Police Department and New Smyrna Beach Police Department and FBI Safe Streets Task Force also participated in this operation.

Attorney General Moody's Assistant Statewide Prosecutor David Gillespie will handle the case.