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**TWO MEN ARRESTED FOR ALLEGEDLY DISTRIBUTING HUNDREDS
OF FRAUDULENT LAW ENFORCEMENT BADGES AND CREDENTIALS**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and JOHN A. ULIANKO, Regional Director for the Federal Protective Service ("FPS"), Region 2, announced that RALPH RIOS and ROBERT NEVES were arrested today by agents of the Federal Protective Service on charges that they distributed hundreds of false law enforcement badges and credentials. According to the Complaint filed in Manhattan federal court:

NEVES and RIOS are the principals of the U.S. Recovery Bureau (the "School"), which offers monthly classes in bounty hunting and in how to restrain people. The classes regularly take place in Brooklyn and Passaic, New Jersey, and in other locations, including one in Washington Heights, Manhattan, New York. Despite its name, U.S. Recovery Bureau is not a governmental organization.

The School provides graduates of its course with badges and credentials that give the impression that they were issued by actual government law enforcement agencies because, among other reasons, (a) the badge is in the same shape as a New York City Police Department ("NYPD") Detective badge; (b) the badge bears a seal with a bald eagle that is a facsimile of the great seal of the United States; (c) the badge reads "U.S. Recovery Bureau" and under the seal is the word "Agent" and a badge serial number; (d) the badge is in a leather wallet that also holds credentials that are the same shape and size as federal law enforcement credentials and identify the graduate as a "Special Agent" of the "U.S. Recovery Bureau"; (e) the credentials bear an emblem in the center of the card that is a facsimile of the great seal of the United States; and (f) the credentials lack any clear indication that they are not issued by a governmental

organization.

The U.S. Recovery Bureau also sells other materials, including clothing that says "Fugitive Task Force," handcuffs, and batons.

Law enforcement authorities have arrested multiple graduates of U.S. Recovery Bureau for using the credentials issued by the School. On some occasions, students have used their School-issued credentials to try to avoid tickets and other law enforcement actions. In other cases, students have used the credentials to try to access secure government buildings. In at least one case, students have used the School-issued credentials to impersonate law enforcement officers in order to effectuate robberies. Of approximately 943 students who received credentials from U.S. Recovery Bureau, at least 78 were convicted felons at the time they took the U.S. Recovery Bureau course.

NEVES, 49, is from Staten Island, New York, and RIOS, 49, is from Homestead, Florida. They each face a maximum sentence of five years in prison. NEVES was presented this afternoon in Manhattan federal court before United States Magistrate Judge DEBRA FREEMAN; RIOS was presented in the Southern District of Florida.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative work of the FPS and the Police Impersonation Unit of the NYPD in this case, and thanked the United States Marshals Service, the New York Office of the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for their roles in the arrests.

Assistant United States Attorney WILLIAM J. HARRINGTON is in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Complaint are merely accusations and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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