



NEWS RELEASE

December 14, 2010

**ARRESTS MADE ON FEDERAL GUN AND DRUG CHARGES IN  
ROUND-UP BY VIOLENT CRIME IMPACT TEAM**

*Investigation continues in "Operation MTV Network"*

COLUMBUS –Teams of federal, state and local law enforcement officers today began arresting people charged in multiple separate federal indictments alleging that they committed violent crimes while trafficking marijuana, cocaine and heroin, and illegally possessed or used firearms. The charges are the result of an ongoing joint investigation conducted by Columbus Police and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The investigation is known as Operation MTV Network because it centers around the Mt. Vernon Avenue area.

A list of those in custody as of 3:30 p.m. today, when the indictments were unsealed, is attached.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio; Wayne Dixie, Acting Special Agent in Charge, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); and Columbus Police Chief Walter Distelzweig announced the arrests and charges today.

“For four years, officers and agents have investigated violent crime and drug trafficking in Columbus’ 6<sup>th</sup> Precinct,” Stewart said. “The investigators cast the net as wide as possible to get as many people as possible and to make the greatest impact on violent crime they could.”

During the course of the four-year investigation, more than 50 firearms including a machine gun were seized, along with almost two kilograms of crack cocaine.

The long-term investigation is part of an effort to reduce violent crime in targeted neighborhoods by employing Violent Crime Impact Teams (VCIT) of federal, state and local law enforcement officers.

ATF launched the VCIT initiative in June 2004. The VCIT teams target areas of the community affected by violent crimes and firearms violence. Federal, state and local law enforcement

agencies team together to identify, disrupt, arrest and prosecute the most violent criminals. The investigators work together to proactively build cases, develop evidence, and bring the most violent criminals to justice. Teams now exist in 31 cities nationwide, including Columbus.

Those arrested have received or will receive their initial appearances in U.S. District Court in Columbus. The U.S. Attorney's Office will ask that most of those arrested be held without bond pending trial.

The U.S. Marshals Service's Southern Ohio Fugitive Apprehension Strike Team (SOFAST) assisted with the arrests.

An indictment is merely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.

#####

Contact:

Fred Alverson,  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
(614) 469-5715

Kim Riddell  
Special Agent, ATF  
(330) 360-2063

Sgt. Rich Weiner  
Columbus Division of Police  
(614) 645-4593