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NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
ON OCTOBER 30, 2012**

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Two Defendants in Aryan Knights Investigation Plead Guilty

Hood and Palma Admit to Unlawful Possessing a Firearm

BOISE – United States Attorney Wendy J. Olson announced today that two of the 21 individuals recently indicted in 13 separate indictments for distributing methamphetamine and possessing firearms, entered guilty pleas in federal court today. James Everette Hood, 40, and Rory Vincent Palma, 38, both of Boise, pleaded guilty to possessing a firearm after having been convicted of a crime punishable by more than one year imprisonment.

A federal grand jury indicted Hood on April 12, 2012; Palma on July 11. The two indictments and the 11 others were the result of a long-term investigation by the Treasure Valley Metro Violent Crimes Task Force. The investigation began when the task force focused on illegal drug distribution by the “Aryan Knights,” a gang active both in prison and on the streets throughout Idaho. Through the investigation, law enforcement agents identified Aryan Knights gang members who were trafficking methamphetamine, as well as associates of the gang who were the source of that methamphetamine.

Of the 21 defendants indicted, 13 were indicted on drug charges, including four counts of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine, 15 counts of distributing methamphetamine, and four counts of possessing methamphetamine with the intent to distribute. Eight were indicted on firearm charges, including six counts of unlawfully possessing firearms, two counts of possessing sawed-off shotguns, and one count of transferring a sawed-off shotgun. Two were indicted on both drug and firearms charges, including two counts of distributing methamphetamine and two counts of unlawfully possessing firearms.

Six individuals were indicted on August 14, including Joshua Michael Trent, 31, Christina Shantell Massie, 35, Andrew Gallegos, 23, Jose Silva, 30, Shannon L. Stewart, 41, and Michael P. Duschka, 36; all of Boise. Thirteen were indicted on September 12, including Dallas Tyler Thompson, 31, Cameron James Ball, 25, Joshua Michael Nall, 31, Nicholas Andrew Steele, 26, Lisa Rochel Samayoa, 45, Jesse Ray Delgado, 47, Stephanie Ann Robinson, 29, and Dennis Lynn James, 45, all of Boise; Christopher John Solders, 26, and Darin Scott Melton, 44, both of Twin Falls, Idaho; Nina Ann Lucas, 32, of Pocatello, Idaho; and Mexican nationals Rigoberto Bastrana Carrasco, 36, of Ogden, Utah, and Omar Riveroll-Hernandez, 32, of Long Beach, California. Hood and Palma's cases are the first to be resolved. The remaining defendants are pending trial or have outstanding warrants for their arrest.

The charge of unlawful possession of a firearm is punishable by up to ten years in prison, a maximum fine of \$250,000, and up to three years of supervised release.

Hood and Palma are scheduled to be sentenced on February 11, 2013, by U.S. District Judge Edward J. Lodge at the federal courthouse in Boise.

The indictments are the result of a joint investigation of the Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF), which included the cooperative law enforcement efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, and U.S. Marshals Service; the Treasure Valley Metro Violent Crime Task Force, a task force comprised of federal, state and local agencies, including the Boise Police Department, Ada County Sheriff's Office, Caldwell Police Department, Nampa Police Department, Meridian Police Department, and Canyon County Sheriff's Office; the Twin Falls Police Department, Twin Falls Sheriff's Office, and Idaho State Police.

The OCDETF program is a federal multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional task force that supplies supplemental federal funding to federal and state agencies involved in the identification, investigation, and prosecution of major drug trafficking organizations.

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