

60-year old Massachusetts man sentenced for sharing CSAM on messenger accounts

"A Spencer man was sentenced yesterday in federal court in Worcester for possessing child sexual abuse material (CSAM).

Joseph Michael Smith, 60, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Mark G. Mastroianni to 27 months in prison and five years of supervised release. In November 2022, Smith pleaded guilty to one count of possession of child pornography.

Investigators received several tips that CSAM was shared from messenger accounts tied to Smith's address. During a search of Smith's residence on Nov. 10, 2021, a drive was seized, and a forensic analysis revealed 35 videos depicting children as young as two-years-old being sexually abused, as well as over 300 images depicting CSAM that had downloaded to, and deleted from, the USB drive.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins; Matthew B. Millhollin, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in New England; and Spencer Police Chief David Darrin made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Kristen Noto of Rollins' Worcester Branch Office prosecuted the case.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse, launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the DOJ's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit

23-year old Massachusetts man indicted for possessing, distributing child sexual abuse material

“An East Boston man was indicted by a federal grand jury today for possessing and distributing child sexual abuse material (CSAM).

Cristopher Vladimir Pineda Martinez, 23, was indicted on one count of possession of child pornography and one count of distribution of child pornography. Pineda was arrested and charged by criminal complaint in January 2023.

According to the charging documents, law enforcement identified Pineda as member of several private large-scale group chats involved in the distribution of CSAM on an online chat platform. It is alleged that on Dec. 12, 2022, Pineda distributed eight videos depicting CSAM in three online chat groups. It is further alleged that an additional 54 videos of CSAM, involving children as young as six years old, were found on Pineda’s personal cell phone.

The charge of possession of child pornography provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, at least five years and up to a lifetime of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charge of distribution of child pornography provides for a mandatory minimum sentence of five years and up to 20 years in prison, a mandatory minimum of five years and

up to a lifetime of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins and Matthew B. Millhollin, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in New England made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the United States Postal Inspection Service and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Enforcement and Removal Operations. Assistant U.S. Attorney Meghan C. Cleary of Rollins' Major Crimes Unit is prosecuting the case.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse, launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the DOJ's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/psc>.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law." -Massachusetts Department of Justice.

Two charged with permit and driver's license test conspiracies at Massachusetts RMV

"Two individuals have been charged and have agreed to plead guilty in connection with separate conspiracies to knowingly issue passing test scores to individuals who did not actually pass tests at the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) in Brockton.

Mia Cox-Johnson, 43, of Brockton, was charged with two counts of extortion under color of official right and one count of conspiring to commit extortion. Estevao Semedo, 61, also of Brockton, was charged with one count of conspiracy to commit honest services mail fraud. Plea hearings have not yet been scheduled by the court.

According to the charging documents, Cox-Johnson, a former manager of the RMV service center in Brockton, took money in exchange for giving passing scores on learner's permit tests for both passenger vehicle driver's licenses and Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDLs). It is alleged that between December 2018 and October 2019, Cox-Johnson conspired to take money in exchange for agreeing to give customers passing scores on their multiple-choice learner's permit tests even if they did not pass. These customers were allegedly told to request a paper test instead of taking the test on the RMV computer. Cox-Johnson scored these customers' paper tests.

On Dec. 28, 2018, Cox-Johnson allegedly accepted \$1,000 in cash – delivered from a friend on behalf of another individual – in exchange for giving a passing score to the individual's relative who had failed the passenger vehicle learner's permit

test six times when taking it in their native language. It is further alleged that Cox-Johnson agreed to score the relative as having passed the permit test regardless of whether they had actually passed. Cox-Johnson did in fact pass the relative's test, which was taken on paper in English.

On Oct. 21, 2019, a customer came to the Brockton RMV and took three multiple-choice tests they needed to pass in order to get a commercial learner's permit – a prerequisite to taking the road test for a CDL. Cox-Johnson allegedly accepted \$200 in cash from an individual to score the customer as having passed the tests even if they did not actually pass. In fact, the applicant failed one of the tests, but it is alleged that Cox-Johnson scored the applicant as having passed all three tests.

According to the charging documents, Semedo, the owner of a driving school, conspired to defraud the RMV into issuing driver's licenses to applicants who did not pass the road test. Specifically, it is alleged that Semedo paid a road test examiner at the Brockton RMV service center to misrepresent to the RMV that certain driver's license applicants had passed their road test when in fact they had not. Some of the applicants did not even show up to take the test. As a result of the fraud, the RMV mailed driver's licenses to unqualified applicants.

The charges of extortion under color of official right and conspiracy to commit extortion each provide for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of conspiracy to commit honest services mail fraud provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a \$250,000 fine. The charging document also seeks a \$17,000 forfeiture money judgment against Semedo. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins; Matthew B. Millhollin, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in New England; and Christopher Scharf, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General, Northeast Region, made the announcement today. The investigation was conducted by Homeland Security Investigation's Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force (DBFTF). Valuable assistance was provided by the Mattapoisett Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Christine Wichers and Adam Deitch of Rollins's Public Corruption & Special Prosecutions Unit; Assistant U.S. Attorney Eugenia M. Carris, Deputy Chief of Rollins' Public Corruption & Special Prosecutions Unit; and Assistant U.S. Attorney Mackenzie Duane of Rollins' Major Crimes Unit are prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging document are allegations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law." -Massachusetts Department of Justice.

Boston Police Department sexual assault kit assists in arrest of suspect in 2014 rape

"At about 5:00 PM on Tuesday, February 28, 2023, members of the BPD Fugitive Unit and Sexual Assault Unit arrested Ali Tariq Abdallah-Muhammad, 30, of Dorchester, pursuant to an outstanding warrant. The warrant was issued out of the Dorchester District Court on one count of Rape stemming from

an incident dating back to 2014.

A Sexual Assault investigation which was initiated through the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAECK) which assisted detectives in identifying the suspect in connection to this incident.

The suspect will appear in Dorchester District Court for arraignment on the above-mentioned warrant and this investigation remains active and ongoing.

Community members wishing to assist this investigation anonymously can do so by calling the CrimeStoppers Tip Line at 1(800) 494-TIPS or by texting the word 'TIP' to CRIME (27463). The Boston Police Department will stringently guard and protect the identities of those who wish to help this investigation anonymously.

If you are a victim of a sexual assault that has or has not been reported to the police and would feel more comfortable seeking confidential advice from a non-law enforcement agency, the Boston Police Department encourages you to call the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC) at 1 (800) 841-8371. BARCC provides free and confidential counseling, case management, legal, and medical advocacy services to survivors in the greater Boston area.”-Boston Police Department.

Massachusetts man charged in cold case murder that

utilized a sweet potato

“Cape & Islands District Attorney Robert J. Galibois today announced that Devarus Hampton, 40, of Mashpee, was charged on February 24, 2023 with murder and assault and battery with a dangerous weapon for the February 27, 2011 homicide of Todd Lampley, then 31, of Hyannis.

On February 27, 2011, Barnstable Police officers were dispatched to 42 Fresh Holes Road, Hyannis, for a report of a shooting. Upon arrival, they found Lampley unconscious, bleeding, and suffering from gunshot wounds in a bedroom at the residence. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

A sweet potato was also found at the scene, which was used as a silencer. After testing, prosecutors said the sweet potato had Hampton’s DNA on it. During the time of the murder, Hampton was wearing a GPS monitor because of a previous crime and the tracking of it put Hampton at the home at the time of the murder.

The charges stem from an investigation conducted by Massachusetts State Police Detectives assigned to the Cape and Islands District Attorney’s Office and Barnstable Police Department.

Hampton will be arraigned on the charges on Monday, February 27, 2023 at 9:00 am at the Barnstable District Court.

The Cape and Islands District Attorney’s Office reiterates that all defendants are presumed innocent.”-Barnstable Police Department.

Dartmouth Police arrest New Bedford man in connection with stabbing at Motor Inn

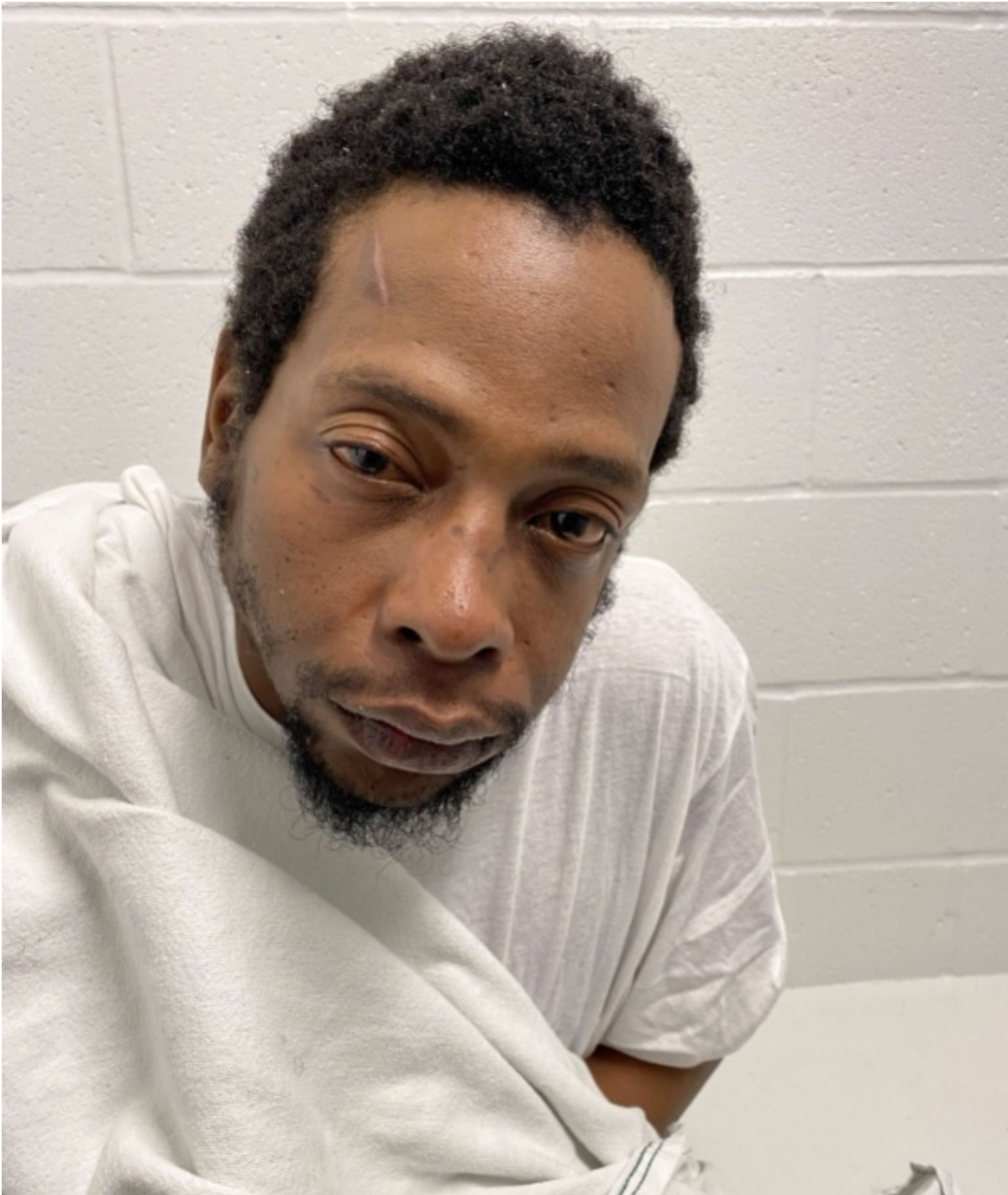
“On Monday, February 27, 2023 at approximately 9:05 p.m., Dartmouth Police responded to the Dartmouth Motor Inn for a reported disturbance.

Upon arrival, officers learned that a sixty-three (63) year old New Bedford man had been stabbed in the face during an altercation with another man, subsequently identified as Tory CARTER, 33, of New Bedford.

While investigating the initial stabbing, officers identified a second victim, a thirty-seven (37) year old Southbridge, Massachusetts woman, who CARTER also allegedly stabbed.

After initial treatment at the scene, both victims were transported to St. Luke’s Hospital in New Bedford with non-life-threatening injuries.

As a result of the incident, CARTER was arrested and charged with assault and battery with a dangerous weapon causing bodily injury, assault and battery on a household member, assault and battery with a dangerous weapon on a person over sixty (60), and assault and battery on a disabled person over sixty (60) causing serious injury.” -Dartmouth Police Department.



Dartmouth Police Department photo.

Dominican man living in

Massachusetts, prior felon, pleads guilty to illegal reentry

"A Dominican man pleaded guilty today in federal court in Boston to illegally reentering the United States after deportation.

Felix Bienvenido Gonzalez-Arias, a/k/a "Victor Manuel Trinidad-Lugo," 38, pleaded guilty to one count of unlawful reentry of a deported alien. U.S. District Court Judge Indira Talwani scheduled sentencing for May 17, 2023. Gonzalez-Arias was indicted by a federal grand jury in December 2022.

At an unknown time, Gonzales-Arias illegally entered the United States. In November 2014, he was arrested in Essex County on state charges of heroin trafficking. Gonzales-Arias was convicted of the offense, sentenced to three and a half to five years in state prison and upon completion of his sentence, he was removed from the United States in April 2018. Some point thereafter, Gonzales-Arias illegally reentered the United States.

On Sept. 1, 2022, Gonzalez-Arias was arrested in Lawrence on drug trafficking charges. . Gonzalez-Arias' fingerprints produced a positive match from those from his 2014 arrest and 2018 removal and he was identified as being illegally present in the United States after deportation.

The charge of unlawful reentry of a deported alien provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins and Todd Lyons, Field Office Director, Boston, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Enforcement and Removal Operations made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Luke A. Goldworm of Rollins' Major Crimes Unit is prosecuting the case." - Massachusetts Department of Justice.

44-year old New Bedford man sentenced to prison for possessing Fentanyl intended for distribution

"A New Bedford man was sentenced today in federal court in Boston for possessing fentanyl, heroin, and cocaine for distribution.

Ramon Serrano, 44, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Denise J. Casper to 10 years in prison and five years of supervised release. In September 2022, Serrano pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute 400 grams or more of fentanyl, cocaine, and heroin.

In February 2019, parole officers visited Serrano's apartment while he was on probation for a heroin trafficking conviction. Inside the residence, officers observed a large amount of cash in plain view, a large bag of marijuana in a bedroom drawer and an open backpack that contained a large quantity of brown and white powder. During a subsequent search, over 544 grams of fentanyl and heroin as well as over 206 grams of cocaine – divided into separate plastic bags for distribution – were seized from Serrano's apartment. Approximately \$27,000,

digital scales, cellular telephones and a money counter were also recovered.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins and New Bedford Police Chief Paul Oliveira made the announcement. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Craig Estes and Charles Dell'Anno of Rollins' Narcotics and Money Laundering Unit prosecuted the case."-Massachusetts Department of Justice.

Boston man allegedly assault and robs U.S.P.S. carrier at gunpoint in Peabody

"A Boston man has been arrested and charged in connection with the Jan. 4, 2023 armed robbery of a United States Postal Service (USPS) letter carrier in Massachusetts.

Anthony Diaz, 20, was charged with forcibly assaulting, resisting, opposing, impeding, intimidating, and interfering with a United States Postal Employee, while they were engaged in the performance of their official duties, and did so by use of a deadly weapon, a firearm. In addition, Diaz was also charged with assaulting a person having lawful charge, custody, and control of United States mail, money, and other property of the United States, with the intent to rob, steal and purloin that mail, money, and other property of the United States, and in doing so put the life of that victim in jeopardy by the use of a firearm. Diaz was arrested on Feb. 17, 2023 and, following an initial appearance in Worcester this afternoon, was detained pending a hearing set for Feb. 27, 2023.

According to the charging documents, USPS has seen a rise in the use of Arrow Keys to facilitate the theft of U.S. Mail. An Arrow Key is a specific key designed to open designated blue USPS collection boxes in a specific area. These Arrow Keys are the property of USPS and it is a federal offense for an unauthorized person to possess one. Since July 2022, there have been at least 12 assaults on USPS letter carriers while in the performance of their official duties in Boston and surrounding cities and towns. These incidents included the attempted or successful robbery of USPS Arrow Keys from letter carriers in at least 10 instances. Additionally, of these 10, six of the robberies were instances where the perpetrators were reportedly armed with a knife, firearm, or both.

It is alleged that, on Jan. 4, 2023, in Peabody, Mass., Diaz approached a USPS letter carrier and stated, "Give me the keys," while pointing a semi-automatic pistol at the victim. After the victim handed Diaz the USPS vehicle key, Diaz allegedly responded, "Give me the rest of the key," and "Hurry up or I'll shoot you." The victim removed his keychain, which was attached to his belt, containing his USPS Arrow Key and asked if he could have his vehicle key back. Allegedly, Diaz did not respond, as he turned, placing the firearm in his right jacket pocket, and walked directly to the dark grey sedan parked in the area of 3A Veterans Memorial Drive. It is further alleged that Diaz stopped at the rear of the vehicle with the trunk open, before getting into the driver's seat and departing.

"The national trend of threatening, assaulting and robbing United States postal employees for Arrow Keys has sadly made its way to Massachusetts. Postal workers are essential to countless aspects of our community and often go to great lengths to provide their invaluable services, at times in incredibly challenging circumstances," said United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins. "We allege Mr. Diaz targeted a mail carrier and robbed the victim at gun point for an Arrow

Key. I commend the excellent investigative work by our USPS partners, and issue warning to anyone seeking to harm postal workers for financial gain: you will be identified, apprehended and prosecuted in federal court."

"Today's arrest has been a true team effort," said Darnell Edwards, Acting Inspector in Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Boston Division. "The U.S. Postal Inspection Service would like to thank Peabody Police, Boston Police, and the Massachusetts State Police for their assistance in this investigation. Let today's arrest serve as an example to criminals: if you target U.S. Postal Service employees and accost them with a gun, you will be identified and prosecuted. Postal Inspectors are watching, and we will tirelessly pursue you to bring you to justice."

The charge of assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers or employees, provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, at least three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charge of robbery of any person having lawful charge, control, or custody of any mail matter or of any money or other property of the United States provides for a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, at least three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

U.S. Attorney Rollins; USPS Acting INC Edwards made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Postal Service, Office of the Inspector General. Assistant U.S. Attorney Luke A. Goldworm of Rollins' Major Crimes Unit is prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of

law.

” -Massachusetts Department of Justice.

31-year old New Bedford Fentanyl dealer sentenced to prison

“A 31-year-old New Bedford man arrested in connection with a multi-year narcotics trafficking investigation, dubbed “Operation Lunch Break,” who while out on bail was apprehended for distributing Fentanyl, was sentenced to serve three to four years in state prison, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Jesus Santiago pleaded guilty in Fall River Superior Court to indictments charging him with Possession with Intent to Distribute Fentanyl, Possession with Intent to Distribute a class D drug and Conspiracy.

The defendant was one of about a dozen individuals arrested at the culmination of the long-term covert investigation in June 2021. He was charged in the case with Conspiracy.

Then, in July 2022, he became the target of a New Bedford Police investigation into a narcotics distribution service being operated out of the defendant’s Malden Street residence. During an execution of a search warrant at the defendant’s residence, police located 27.4 grams of Fentanyl, 62 grams of marijuana packaged for sale, digital scales and other paraphernalia associated with the illicit drug trade.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney

Danielle Pixley and the three to four year state prison sentence was imposed by Judge Raffi Yessayan.

"This defendant was arrested and was put on bail as part of our 'Operation Lunch Break' wiretap investigation. While out pretrial release, he continued to trafficking in narcotics and was re-arrested. He has a history of drug dealing convictions and needs to be kept off the street to protect the public," District Attorney Quinn said.

"Operation Lunch Break" was a joint investigation led by Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III's office, the Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit assigned to District Attorney Quinn's office, and the Office of former Attorney General Maura Healey, which included assistance from members of the Bristol County Sheriff's Office, Dartmouth and Fall River Police Departments, as well as the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Rhode Island HIDTA Task Force. These agencies worked together to dismantle the Geraldo Rivera Drug Trafficking Organization, the members of which distributed large amounts of fentanyl, cocaine, marijuana and opioid pills throughout the greater New Bedford area."-Bristol County District Attorney's Office.