



The United States Department of Justice

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Drug ring tied to Aryan prison gang indicted with 24 federal arrests

More than 1.9 million doses of fentanyl and over 230 pounds of methamphetamine seized; More than 225 guns and firearm parts taken off the streets

Tacoma – Twenty-seven people were indicted by a grand jury for drug trafficking, and many of those in the indictment are tied to the “Aryan Family,” a white supremacist prison gang, announced U.S. Attorney Nick Brown. Twenty-four of the defendants have been arrested over the last five days in Washington and Arizona. The alleged leader of the drug trafficking organization, Jesse James Bailey, is also an influential member of the Aryan Family prison gang. Bailey is alleged to have trafficked huge amounts of fentanyl, methamphetamine, and other drugs in Washington, Idaho, and to Alaska. Bailey and many other defendants will have detention hearings in Tacoma today.

“While the dozen counts in this indictment do not detail every criminal moment in this conspiracy, it does provide one remarkable statistic: 48 firearms seized in this case even before last week’s takedown,” said U.S. Attorney Nick Brown. “On Wednesday we took another 177 guns off the street and additional kilos of

fentanyl and meth. The level of danger is high when you have people connected to Aryan prison gangs spreading drugs and using guns in our community.”

“This operation was the culmination of a year and a half of great investigative work,” said Richard A. Collodi, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Seattle field office. “We were able to arrest over 20 subjects, some of whom are alleged to have operated this drug organization from prison, and also prevented vast quantities of dangerous drugs from being sold on our streets. I'm so proud of how the FBI, along with our federal, state, and local partners worked together to keep our community safe.”

On Wednesday March 22, 2023, the coordinated takedown involving ten SWAT teams and more than 350 law enforcement officers resulted in the seizure of an additional 177 firearms, more than ten kilos of methamphetamine, 11 kilos of fentanyl pills and more than a kilo of fentanyl powder, three kilos of heroin, and more than \$330,000 in cash from eighteen locations in Washington and Arizona.

These defendants have been indicted by the grand jury. All are in federal custody unless otherwise noted.

Jesse James Bailey, 39, of Steilacoom, Washington, in custody
Thomas Carver, 59, of Auburn, Washington in custody
Bryson Gill, 30, of Buckeye, Arizona, in custody in Arizona
Yehoshua Kilp, 37, incarcerated in Washington State prison
Gustavo Castellanos-Tapia, 37, of Burien, Washington, in custody
Candice Bailey, 41, of Steilacoom, in custody
Ronald McComb, 58, of Ridgefield, Washington, in custody
Keagen Larsen, 28, currently incarcerated in King County Jail
Sean Moinette, 54, of Spanaway, Washington in custody
Gregory Beers, 30, of Edgewood, Washington, being sought by law enforcement
Michael Warren, 63, of Shelton, Washington, in custody
Michael Slocumb, 44, of Concho, Arizona, in custody in Arizona
Isaac Cervantes, 24, of Phoenix, in custody in Arizona
Sara Thompson, 37, of Bonney Lake, Washington, in custody
Shawn Ellis, 31, of Renton, Washington, in custody
Eric Smith, 52, incarcerated in Washington State prison
Joseph Hempel, 45, of Burien, Washington, in custody
Stephanie Yepez, 42, being sought by law enforcement
Daniel Hammond, 41, of Puyallup, Washington, in custody
Philip Boorkman, 40, of Seattle, in custody
C'La Morales, 36, of Pierce County, in custody
Ronnie Griffin, 64, of Tacoma, in custody
Anna Sarnes, 37, of Quilcene, Washington, in custody
Anthony Escoto, 51, of Tukwila, in custody

William Tripp, 34, being sought by law enforcement
Dana Hanson, 57, of Burbank, Washington, in custody
Justin Hanson, 48, of Burbank, Washington in custody

Before last week's takedown, during the year that the ring was under investigation, law enforcement seized 830,000 fentanyl pills, 5.5 pounds of fentanyl powder, 223 pounds of methamphetamine, 3.5 pounds of heroin, 5 pounds of cocaine, \$388,000 in cash, and 48 firearms.

"The sheer amount of narcotics seized in this investigation is shocking," said Jacob D. Galvan, Acting Special Agent in Charge, DEA Seattle. "The fentanyl seized in this operation contained enough lethal doses to kill everyone who lives in Tacoma and Seattle, with enough lethal doses left over to poison another half a million people.

"DOC is honored to be part of this interdisciplinary task force," said Department of Corrections Secretary Cheryl Strange. "It takes a highly skilled team to investigate, disrupt and dismantle a sophisticated group of criminals like this. Fentanyl use by incarcerated individuals and those under DOC supervision in the community has become a serious problem. Removing a major supplier of this deadly drug is a huge victory for all Washingtonians."

"Combatting large criminal enterprises who have tentacles into our communities, prisons, and borders cannot be accomplished without partnerships at all levels. This joint effort demonstrates our capabilities to investigate and seize firearms, narcotics and large amounts of cash used to destabilize our communities and institutions," said Special Agent in Charge Robert Hammer, who oversees HSI operations in the Pacific Northwest. "We're thankful to the FBI, DEA, ATF, CBP, Tacoma PD, Thurston County Narcotics Task Force and all our partners in this investigation which made the dismantlement of this organization possible."

"This operation is an example of the difference we can make when we collaborate to keep illegal guns and drugs from hitting our streets," said Chief Avery Moore, Tacoma Police Department. "Guns and drugs have taken the lives of our loved ones, friends, neighbors, and community members. The contraband confiscated in this effort will not be allowed to harm anyone. The Tacoma Police Department, along with our law enforcement partners will not stop in the pursuit to bring those who set out to harm and exploit our communities to justice."

This case is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) investigation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level drug traffickers, money launderers, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations that threaten the United States by using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven,

multi-agency approach that leverages the strengths of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies against criminal networks.

This investigation was led by the FBI with critical investigative teamwork from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the Washington State Department of Corrections and significant local assistance from the Tacoma Police Department, Pierce County Sheriff's Office, and the Thurston County Narcotics Task Force, led by the Thurston County Sheriff's Office. Throughout this investigation the following agencies assisted the primary investigators: Washington State Patrol, Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine, Lewis County Sheriff's Office, Lakewood Police Department, and U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS).

In addition to the agencies above, on Wednesday March 22, 2023, agents and officers from FBI Phoenix, DEA Phoenix Field Division, the U.S. Marshals Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (ATF), and the Vancouver, Pasco, Kennewick, Puyallup, Steilacoom, and Burien Police Departments, the Clark, Cowlitz, Jefferson, King, and Benton County Sheriff's Offices all assisted with arrests and search warrants.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Max Shiner and Zach Dillon.

The Washington State Department of Corrections is the only entity in Washington that provides pictures of inmates. Photo requests can go to:
DOCMediaRelations@doc1.wa.gov

Use these links to access photos from the FBI:

Picture 1 depicts a seizure of approximately 19 firearms, 3,372 grams of suspected methamphetamine, 1,322 grams of suspected fentanyl-laced pills, and over \$210,000 in United States currency.

1. <https://s3-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/fbifileshare/DL/share-dl.html?link=1-ZoayF1z04MlG.jpg>

Pictures 2, 3, and 4 depict a seizure of approximately 650,000 suspected fentanyl pills, two pill presses, 15.6 kilograms of suspected methamphetamine, approximately 1/2 kilogram of fentanyl powder, and nine firearms from one residence. Agents seized approximately 360 grams of fentanyl powder, 66 grams of suspected fentanyl pills, 10 firearms, one firearm suppressor/silencer, approximately \$56,000 in U.S. currency, and multiple phones from another location and four firearms at a third location.

2. <https://s3-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/fbifileshare/DL/share-dl.html?link=2-3fSh5vlbDiar.jpg>

3. <https://s3-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/fbifileshare/DL/share-dl.html?link=3-sanrnVRbaluP.PNG>
4. <https://s3-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/fbifileshare/DL/share-dl.html?link=4-83GepITNqAtz.jpg>

Picture 5 depicts seizures from the Concho, AZ search.

5. <https://s3-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/fbifileshare/DL/share-dl.html?link=5-075eyToQ1QTQ.jpg>

Picture 6 depicts approximately 104 pounds of methamphetamine in mustard-colored packaging, one kilogram of suspected fentanyl powder, and more than 20,000 suspected fentanyl pills.

6. <https://s3-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/fbifileshare/DL/share-dl.html?link=6-rrHCtSS3BBQQ.jpg>

Picture 7 depicts approximately 2,588.8 grams of methamphetamine, 2625.9 grams of cocaine, 1057.4 grams of heroin, 4480.1 grams of fentanyl

7. <https://s3-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/fbifileshare/DL/share-dl.html?link=7-CdVGrSyNmTUc.jpg>

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