

HARLINGEN POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

2016-0220

HONOR



COURAGE



INTEGRITY

Prostitution Sting

In response to citizens concerns the Harlingen Police Department's Organized Crime Unit conducted a large scale sex trade sting resulting in a total of 15 arrests over two days. The operation ran from Friday, September 16th thru Saturday, September 17th and was concentrated near "C" Street, "D" Street and Van Buren (Gutierrez Park area). Undercover police officers were approached by the suspects and solicited or agreed to engage in a sex act for compensation. Audio and Video was utilized for this operation. All 15 suspects were arrested immediately after the solicitation and transported to the Harlingen Police Department for processing.

This operation was made possible by funding of a Texas Border Star grant that assists law enforcement agencies in battling issues such as organized crime, human trafficking of women, men, children, and immigrants who many times are forced into the sex trade, or sex slave trade by force, fear, intimidation, or drugs. According to estimates, over 2 million people are being trafficked around the world. Approximately 80 percent are women and children. This operation focused on those who by their participation as customers perpetuate this crime, its victims, the families of the victims, and the families of the suspects who they return to.

Police Chief Jeffrey Adickes said "Harlingen is a destination City in the Valley that values quality of life for families and individuals where they can live without crime, or the fear of crime in a clean and safe Community. We will continue these efforts to support those Community values as we serve this great City."

The Harlingen Police Department would also like to recognize the law enforcement partners involved in the success of the operation, namely, the State of Texas, the Texas Department of Public Safety, Cameron County District Attorney's Office, the Cameron County HIDTA Office, and the City of Harlingen Municipal Court.

Solicitation of Prostitution is a Class B Misdemeanor, which carries a fine of up to \$2,000.00 and up to 6 months in Jail.

*The Harlingen Police Department reminds citizens to report any suspicious activity to their local police department. In Harlingen, you can contact us for Emergencies at (911) or the Police Communications Center at (956)216-5940, the H.P.D. Front Desk Supervisor at (956)216-5401, or the Harlingen Area Crime Stoppers at (956)425-TIPS (8477). **Note** * Arrestees are innocent until proven guilty in a Court of Law*



Chief of Police
Jeffrey Adickes

Assistant Chief
Michael Kester

Executive Staff

Deputy Chief
Luciano Rubio

Deputy Chief
Hector Leal

Deputy Chief
Daniel Villarreal

Deputy Administrator
Diane Sanchez

Executive Staff PIO
Commander
Osborne

Public Information
PIO Staff

Sergeant
John Parrish

Officer
Larry Moore

Officer
Orlando Gonzales



Harlingen Police Department
1018 Fair Park Boulevard
Harlingen, Texas 78550
956.216.5401 – www.myharlingen.us





Mark Judas Moody
Age 32
La Feria Resident



David Ahumada
Age 48
La Feria Resident



Jose Nava
Age 24
Harlingen Resident



Damian Mendoza
Age 21
Harlingen Resident



Kevin Abraham Arreola
Age 19
Harlingen Resident



Ricky Dale Merker
Age 55
Harlingen Resident



Felipe Fuentes
Age 32
Harlingen Resident



Martin Castillo
Age 47
Los Fresnos Resident



Claudio Emilio Rojas
Age 29
Harlingen Resident



Christopher Woodward
Age 42
Harlingen Resident



Ricardo Briones Jr.
Age 50
Harlingen Resident



Jose Marquez-Bustos
Age 24
Harlingen Resident



Daniel Melendez
Age 37
Harlingen Resident



Ricardo Martinez
Age 46
Harlingen Resident



Jose Hernandez-Espinoza
Age 21
Harlingen Resident



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