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\$200,000 in Heroin Seized in Joint Narcotics Investigation

The Mercer County Narcotics Task Force, Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General, Bureau of Narcotics Investigation and Drug Control, and Drug Enforcement Administration HIDTA 4 recently concluded a six-month joint investigation into heroin distribution in Mercer County, Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri reported.

According to Prosecutor Onofri, detectives identified Ewing resident Daquan Baylor as the individual responsible for bringing large quantities of heroin to Mercer County from Philadelphia. Last week, authorities executed numerous search warrants in two states. Five individuals, including Baylor, were arrested, and \$200,000 in heroin was taken off of the streets.

“As the opioid addiction crisis continues to escalate across the country, I want these drug dealers to be on notice that we are going to fight in Mercer County,” Prosecutor Onofri said. “We are going to use every possible avenue to respond to the heroin epidemic and it is through cooperative investigations like this that we can unite with our local, state and federal law enforcement partners to stop the flow of poison into our communities.”

On April 3, surveillance officers positioned in Philadelphia observed an individual identified as Cristian Baez-Belliard exit a residence on Tampa Street concealing a large item underneath his jacket and enter a silver Nissan Sentra. Officers followed the vehicle directly to Suburban Plaza on Scotch Road in Ewing, NJ, where Baylor arrived in a white Nissan Sentra to meet him. Officers with the MCNTF, the Ewing Police Department and

the New Jersey State Police detained Baylor and Baez-Belliard after observing them exchange the suspected drugs.

After obtaining search warrants for both vehicles, officers located 150 bricks of heroin inside of a plastic bag on the front seat of Baylor's Sentra. A hidden compartment used to hide narcotics and money was also found within the vehicle, however the compartment was empty. A plastic bag containing \$20,980 in cash was located on the front passenger side floor of Baez-Belliard's vehicle, which also had a hidden compartment.

A search of Baylor's Country Lane residence in Ewing revealed \$2,800 in cash and seven suspected prescription Percocet pills. Cash totaling \$218 was found on Baylor's person.

As a result of the investigation, the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General, Bureau of Narcotics Investigation and Drug Control, obtained a search warrant for the residence on Tampa Street in Philadelphia. Officers located a heroin "mill" containing approximately 819 grams of suspected heroin, approximately 15 bricks (750 bags) of suspected heroin, approximately 12 grams of fentanyl and numerous items utilized for packaging and distributing heroin. Jonathan Nunez-Cordero, 25, Armando Santos, 20, and Yoncarlo Nunez-Cordero, 21, were arrested at this location. All three individuals were charged with numerous narcotic-related offenses and lodged in a Pennsylvania jail pending future court proceedings.

Baylor, 26, and Baez-Belliard, 25, were each charged with possession of a controlled dangerous substance and possession with the intent to distribute. The prosecutor's office has filed a motion to detain Baylor. Baez-Belliard was released pending future court proceedings.

Prosecutor Onofri said the approximate street value of the seized heroin is \$196,800. The prescription pills are valued at \$210 and the fentanyl \$720. The total money seized was \$23,998.

The charges are the result of an investigation by the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office, the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General, Bureau of Narcotics Investigation and Drug Control, the Drug Enforcement Administration HIDTA 4, the New Jersey State Police, and the Ewing, Hamilton, Princeton and Trenton police, under the command of the prosecutor's Special Investigations Unit.

Despite having been charged, every defendant is presumed innocent until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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