



OFFICE OF THE MERCER COUNTY PROSECUTOR

ANGELO J. ONOFRI

Prosecutor

TRACEY McKEOWN

Chief of County Detectives

209 S. Broad Street, 3rd Floor
P.O. Box 8068
Trenton, New Jersey 08650-0068
Phone: (609) 989-6350
mercercountyprosecutor.com

STEPHANIE A. KATZ

First Assistant Prosecutor

MICHAEL J. NOVEMBRE

Deputy Chief of County Detectives

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CONTACT: Casey A. DeBlasio
(609) 989-6379

\$100,000 in Cocaine Seized by the Mercer County Narcotics Task Force

The Mercer County Narcotics Task Force (MCNTF) concluded an investigation this week with the seizure of more than \$100,000 in cocaine, Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri reported.

Onofri stated that his office received information regarding a postal package containing suspected narcotics being delivered to a residence on Orne Avenue in Ewing from Los Angeles, California.

On Monday, November 18, 2019, officers observed an unknown male, later identified as Shavanon Coates, circle the area of Orne Avenue several times while driving a 2001 Nissan Pathfinder. At approximately 3:30 p.m., officers observed a mail carrier arrive at the address and Coates pull into the driveway. After a brief conversation, the mail carrier handed the package to Coates and departed the area. As officers moved in to detain him, Coates saw them, threw the package inside of the Nissan Pathfinder and took off on foot. Officers gave chase, pursuing Coates over several fences and through backyards, until a perimeter was set up and the Ewing police called in for assistance. Coates was subsequently apprehended by Ewing police and MCNTF members in the rear of 22 Allison Avenue.

Officers obtained search warrants for the vehicle and postal package, and discovered the package contained two and a half pounds of cocaine, with a street value of approximately \$100,000. Coates was found to be in possession of \$464 in cash. The Nissan Pathfinder was seized pending forfeiture proceedings.

Coates, 37, of Trenton, is charged with possession of a controlled dangerous substance, possession with the intent to distribute and resisting arrest. He was taken into custody by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement after his arrest.

Officers with the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office, the U.S. Postal Service Office of the Inspector General, the Mercer County Sheriff's Office, Homeland Security Investigations, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration – Camden Resident Office, and the Ewing, Hamilton, Princeton and Trenton police, under the command of the prosecutor's Special Investigations Unit, assisted with the investigation.

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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