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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 19, 2020

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58 Arrested and Charged in Mercer County in Multi-Jurisdictional ATM Theft Scam

MERCER COUNTY, NJ – Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri announced today that 58 individuals were arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit theft by deception in an organized scheme that used prepaid debit cards to steal from ATMs across the county.

On August 18, 2020, at approximately 8 a.m., Robbinsville Township police officers responded to the Santander Bank on Route 33 after receiving information that multiple individuals were gathering around the ATM using stacks of cards to withdraw money and attempting to avoid the camera on the ATM. As officers approached, the group took notice and began to hurriedly move away from the ATM. Ultimately, 20 individuals were taken into custody by police, each with multiple debit/credit cards and money in their possession.

Robbinsville police reached out to the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office for assistance and investigators from both agencies quickly began collaborating with authorities in nearby towns like Hamilton, Hopewell, Lawrence, Princeton and West Windsor, as well as Santander Bank.

During the course of the investigation, officers learned that Camden County Prosecutor's Office reported that multiple thefts occurred at Santander ATMs in its jurisdiction by individuals to fraudulently obtained money. Camden County Prosecutor's Office advised that the suspects in those thefts came from New York to commit the fraud in New Jersey.

Officers also received information from multiple law enforcement sources that instructions were being shared on social media on how to defraud Santander ATM machines.

Prosecutor Onofri praised the teamwork of local law enforcement and said the open lines of communication and sharing of resources allowed law enforcement to get ahead of these scammers in some instances.

At about 9:40 a.m., West Windsor dispatch relayed the information that Robbinsville had a number of individuals in custody. Dispatch also advised that Princeton reported a large sum of money fraudulently obtained from a Santander ATM in its jurisdiction. Information also came in relating that the FBI and the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office were actively investigating these cases.

"As a result, heightened awareness was given to the activity at Santander locations in West Windsor," Prosecutor Onofri said. "West Windsor officers and detectives from my office were able to detain and investigate five separate crews of suspects at different times throughout the day at the Santander Bank on Princeton-Hightstown Road, resulting in many arrests."

In Lawrence Township, police were also alerted to the ATM scam perpetrated against the Princeton Santander, and a description was provided of the suspects and the vehicles used in commission of that crime. Lawrence was further made aware of the countywide scam that was occurring and heightened attention was given to the Santander banks in their town. Shortly thereafter, at about 9:45 a.m., a vehicle matching the description of the vehicle used in the Princeton scam was spotted in the area of the Santander bank at on Franklin Corner Road. The occupants from the suspect vehicle were stopped and investigated, and ultimately charged with the conspiracy. The bank reported abnormally high ATM usage and a shortage of approximately \$40,000.

In Hamilton Township, at approximately 10 a.m., Hamilton police were detailed to the Santander Bank located on South Broad Street on the report of two suspicious vehicles in the parking lot of the bank. It was reported that other Santander Banks in neighboring jurisdictions were reporting suspicious activities at the ATMs so units were detailed to Santander Bank ATM locations throughout Hamilton. Additional vehicles and suspects were located throughout the day at the ATMs found at 1700 Nottingham Way, 1700 Kuser Road and 2730 Nottingham Way. During the investigations bank cards, cash, marijuana, and a handgun were recovered.

Hopewell Township had three separate incidents involving separate crews that started around 11:30 a.m. at the Santander Bank on Pennington Road. Several foot chases ensued and all subjects were apprehended. In addition to the conspiracy charge, Sekou Touray, of East Orange, NJ, was charged with resisting arrest and aggravated assault of a prosecutor's detective.

Similar incidents were reported in multiple other jurisdictions throughout the state. The investigation is ongoing and additional charges may be pending. Authorities are still executing search warrants and working with Santander Bank to determine exactly how much money was stolen. At this time, the total across municipalities in Mercer County is more than \$250,000.

During the investigation, bank cards, debit cards, credit cards, cash, marijuana, and a handgun were recovered. Additionally, more than a dozen vehicles were seized throughout the county. Robbinsville K-9 Quori sniffed out cocaine totaling 150 grams in the trunk of one of the suspect vehicles in Robbinsville.

The following individuals were arrested and charged in Mercer County on Tuesday, August 18, 2020:

Hamilton Township

1. Tyler Holness, 21, of Yonkers, NY
2. Rasheem Lee Jr., 18, of Bronx, NY
3. Kymani Hinds, 18, of Bronx, NY
4. Michael Santiago, 26, of Bronx, NY
5. Saquan Vaines, 21, of Arverne, NY
6. Kareema Hall, 20, of Bronx, NY
7. Justin Brown, 22, of Arverne, NY
8. Michael Manroop, 24, of Cambridge Heights, NY
9. Nayvon Patten, 18, of Linderhurst, NY
10. Jerry Trujillo, 24, of Maplewood, NJ
11. Zaire Lewis, 18, of Maplewood, NJ
12. Frankie Jerome, 21, of Maplewood, NJ
13. Ahmad Muhammad, 18, of Maplewood, NJ
14. Jordan Saquan, 24, of Brooklyn, NY
15. Arian Rasul, 22, of Brooklyn, NY
16. Starsheen Jones, 24, of Brooklyn, NY
17. Jordan Amador, 27, of Brooklyn, NY
18. Steven Wilson, 23, of New York, NY
19. Nikye Bee, 25, of New York, NY
20. Kevin Jones, 23, of New York, NY

Hopewell Township

1. Ebrama Touray, 23, of East Orange, NJ
2. Mbemba Kaba, 23, of East Orange, NJ
3. Yacouba Sanogo, 24, of Newark, NJ
4. Sekou Touray, 22, of East Orange, NJ
5. Kingsley Nicolas, 22, of East Orange, NJ
6. Orlando C. Chambers Jr., 21, of Lindenhurst, NY
7. Emmanuel Edoise Oyakhilome, 22, of Lindenhurst, NY

Lawrence Township

1. Elijah N. Oliver, 22, of Brooklyn, NY
2. Dandrea Taylor Dey, 22, of Brooklyn, NY
3. Quentin A. Hosten, 22, of Brooklyn, NY
4. Zachary B. Johnson, 21, of Brooklyn, NY

Robbinsville Township

1. Amoire Dupree, 26, of Brooklyn, NY
2. Brittany Gittens, 20, of Brooklyn, NY
3. Hurshum Gittens, 26, of Brooklyn, NY
4. Charles Gordon, 30, of Brooklyn, NY
5. Veronica Gregory, 22, of Brooklyn, NY
6. Oswin Philander, 21, of Brooklyn, NY
7. Jeffrey Debrosse, 31, of Brooklyn, NY
8. Bolade Akingboy, 29, of West Hempstead, NY
9. Jeffrey Desir, 34, of Brooklyn, NY
10. Julio Ramos, 33, of Jamaica, NY
11. Kevin Philander, 26, of Newark, DE
12. Jishawn Lee, 19, of Brooklyn, NY
13. Marlon Owens, 28, of Bronx, NY
14. Alex Burnett, 30, of Jersey City, NJ
15. D.T., 16, of Brooklyn, NY
16. J.F., 16, of Brooklyn, NY
17. Ackeem Samuel, 25, of Brooklyn, NY
18. Brandon Esperance, 20, of Brooklyn, NY
19. Kevin Owusu, 19, of Brooklyn, NY
20. Kareem Courtney, 23, of Brooklyn, NY

West Windsor

1. Philek Barington, 25, of Queens, NY
2. LaTonya S. Stevens, 26, of Bronx, NY
3. Qwashan D. Mack, 19, of North Brunswick, NJ
4. Hymeen S. Reynolds, 19, of East Orange, NJ
5. Brajae U. Jones, 23, of Englewood, NJ
6. Bryon K Jones Jr., 28, of Garfield, NJ
7. Carla E. Donayre-Solano, 28, of Garfield, NJ

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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