



NATIONAL HIDTA AWARDS

June 2022
Washington, D.C.

ONDCP THANKS THE REGIONAL HIDTA DIRECTORS FOR THEIR INVALUABLE WORK AND PARTNERSHIP

OUTSTANDING INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

Appalachia HIDTA | Louisville DEA Task Force
Central Florida HIDTA | DEA Mexican Poly Drug – HIDTA 2
Los Angeles HIDTA | Southern California Drug Task Force, Group 51

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Atlanta-Carolinas HIDTA | Georgia Low Country Task Force
San Diego-Imperial Valley HIDTA | Costa Pacifico Money Laundering Task Force, Group 2

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OUTSTANDING PUBLIC HEALTH/PUBLIC SAFETY COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

Arizona HIDTA | Shelly Mowrey, Arizona HIDTA Demand Reduction Coordinator, and Merilee Fowler, Executive Director, MATFORCE

ALASKA HIDTA

Michael A. Troster

APPALACHIA HIDTA

Vic Brown

ARIZONA HIDTA

Dawn Mertz

ATLANTA-CAROLINAS HIDTA

Dan Salter

CENTRAL FLORIDA HIDTA

AJ Collazo

CENTRAL VALLEY CALIFORNIA HIDTA

John J. Martin

CHICAGO HIDTA

Nicholas Roti

GULF COAST HIDTA

Tim Valenti

HAWAII HIDTA

Gary Yabuta

HOUSTON HIDTA

Mike McDaniel

INDIANA HIDTA

Chuck Porucznik

LIBERTY MID-ATLANTIC HIDTA

Jerry Daley

LOS ANGELES HIDTA

Roger Bass

MICHIGAN HIDTA

Ray Ollie

MIDWEST HIDTA

Daniel Neill

NEVADA HIDTA

Keith Carter

NEW ENGLAND HIDTA

Jay Fallon

NEW MEXICO HIDTA

Will R. Glaspy

NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY HIDTA

Chauncey Parker

NORTH CENTRAL HIDTA

James Bohn

NORTH FLORIDA HIDTA

Bob Peryam

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HIDTA

Mike Sena

NORTHWEST HIDTA

Jonathan Weiner

OHIO HIDTA

Derek Siegle

OREGON-IDAHO HIDTA

Chris Gibson

PUERTO RICO-U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS HIDTA

Samuel Santana

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIDTA

Keith Weis

SAN DIEGO-IMPERIAL VALLEY HIDTA

David King

SOUTH FLORIDA HIDTA

Hugo J. Barrera

SOUTH TEXAS HIDTA

Tony Garcia

TEXOMA HIDTA

Lance Sumpter

WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE HIDTA

Thomas Carr

WEST TEXAS HIDTA

Travis Kuykendall

NATIONAL HIDTA ASSISTANCE CENTER

Tomas Sanchez

OUTSTANDING INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SHARING

Houston HIDTA | Houston Investigative Support Center (HISC)

OUTSTANDING OVERDOSE INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

New England HIDTA | Southern New Hampshire HIDTA Task Force

San Diego-Imperial Valley HIDTA | San Diego County HIDTA Narcotics Task Force Team 10

MARY MARSHALL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING HIDTA SUPPORT STAFF

Washington/Baltimore HIDTA | Ramona Boland, Training Program Manager

OUTSTANDING INTELLIGENCE ANALYST

Washington/Baltimore HIDTA | Casey Dillard, Intelligence Analyst

OUTSTANDING PROSECUTOR

Texoma HIDTA | Anna Marie Bell, Assistant U.S. Attorney, Northern District of Texas - Amarillo Division

HIDTA AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

Texoma HIDTA | Tyler T. Rawdon, DEA Special Agent, Central Oklahoma Task Force

OUTSTANDING INITIATIVE COMMANDER

Puerto Rico-U.S. Virgin Islands HIDTA | Raul Crespo, Group Supervisor, Caribbean Anti-Money Laundering Alliance

HIDTA OF THE YEAR

Northwest HIDTA

OUTSTANDING INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

APPALACHIA HIDTA

Louisville DEA Task Force

In February 2020, the Louisville DEA Task Force identified a large-scale crystal methamphetamine trafficking network being sourced primarily by California based targets of investigation. The Louisville DEA HIDTA Task Force utilized a variety of investigative techniques, including 27 court authorized Title III wire intercepts, to identify how drugs were being transported to the Louisville area by the identified trafficking organization. The results of this investigative effort led to the seizure of 513 pounds of crystal methamphetamine, 3.5 kilograms of cocaine, 1.5 kilograms of heroin, 8 pounds of marijuana, \$635,379 in United States currency, and the arrest of 15 suspects.

OUTSTANDING INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

CENTRAL FLORIDA HIDTA

DEA Mexican Poly Drug – HIDTA 2

The Operation Nosedive investigation led to 373 Title III Intercepts of Blackberry pins, 23 indictments, the seizure of 6,124 kilograms of cocaine, the seizure of multiple aircraft with a combined total value of \$6,375,285 and the seizure of more than \$440,000 in drug money. Through coordination with the Narcotics and Dangerous Drug Section (NDDS) of the Department of Justice, Orlando investigators obtained the indictment of the Venezuelan Minister of Defense, Vladimir Padrino-Lopez, and (to date) have extradited five defendants to include the June 2021 extradition of Consolidated Priority Organization Target (CPOT) Amayo-Nungo. During the course of this investigation, investigators coordinated with multiple other field divisions to include New York, Los Angeles, Houston, and Phoenix. Additionally, investigators coordinated with foreign offices located in Colombia, Venezuela (while in existence), Peru, Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico.

OUTSTANDING INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

LOS ANGELES HIDTA

Southern California Drug Task Force, Group 51

The Southern California Drug Task Force (SCDTF), HIDTA, Group 51, initiated an investigation targeting the Esteban Lopez Drug Trafficking Organization (DTO). During this investigation, the organization's domestic distribution base was identified as utilizing stash houses in the Los Angeles, California area of responsibility. Intelligence developed from a reliable source determined the DTO was working with members of the Sinaloa Drug Cartel to smuggle large quantities of cocaine into the United States.

Group 51's investigation has been a collaborative effort among the following federal, state, and local agencies during this investigation: Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Baltimore District Office, El Paso, Detroit Division, United States Customs and Border Protection, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Interdiction Team and the Los Angeles Police Department. The collaborative efforts of all involved in this investigation resulted in the seizure of more than \$12,500,000 of drug proceeds, 220 kilograms of cocaine, 24 kilograms of heroin, 305 pounds of methamphetamine, approximately 4,000 fentanyl pills, 15 weapons and more than 30 federal arrests, including the domestic command and control leader of the DTO. Several of the arrestees have opted to cooperate in this investigation.

OUTSTANDING FINANCIAL INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

ATLANTA-CAROLINAS HIDTA

Georgia Low Country Task Force

This long-term international investigation conducted by Atlanta-Carolinas HIDTA, Georgia Low Country Task Force, resulted in the dismantlement of a significant Transnational Criminal Organization (TCO) operating within the United States and abroad. The investigation, dubbed Operation Apex, focused on the Terry Wu TCO, a group centered on the distribution of narcotics, money laundering and illegal fish/wildlife trafficking. In July 2020, 12 members of the TCO were indicted by a federal grand jury in the Southern District of Georgia for drug trafficking, money laundering and wire fraud charges. On August 26, 2020, Drug Enforcement Administration and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agents in Georgia, Florida, Michigan, California, and Nevada conducted a nationwide enforcement operation involving the execution of 23 search warrants, 12 arrest warrants and 20 bank account seizure warrants. As a result, agents arrested all 12 indicted TCO members, and seized \$4,382,078 from bank accounts and in cash, 17,735 marijuana plants, 34.5 pounds of high-grade marijuana, four rifles, five handguns, and \$7,520,697 in diamonds, gold, silver, and jewelry. Agents also documented the illegal harvest of more than six tons of shark fins valued at \$420,000 and seized 18 Totoaba fish bladders valued at \$200,000, a delicacy in Asia harvested illegally from an endangered species.

OUTSTANDING FINANCIAL INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

SAN DIEGO-IMPERIAL VALLEY HIDTA

Costa Pacifico Money Laundering Task Force, Group 2

Operation Hulk Smash is an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigation into a major Mexican money laundering organization (MLO) responsible for moving approximately \$400,000,000 from the United States to Mexico annually. The MLO maintains a vast network of money laundering cells and business relationships to facilitate the constant movement of illicit proceeds around the world. From October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2021, the dedicated efforts of Costa Pacifico Money Laundering Task Force (CPTF) members led to 102 separate seizures totaling \$9,755,252 in cash, 57.4 kilograms of fentanyl, 129.13 kilograms of cocaine, 176.67 kilograms of methamphetamine, 73.24 kilograms of heroin, 76,000 fentanyl pills, 14 firearms and 64 arrests across the nation and internationally. In a short period, CPTF agents learned to leverage the full range of the San Diego-Imperial Valley HIDTA and its partners, which include Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Drug Enforcement Administration, San Diego Sheriff's Department, Customs and Border Protection, and Internal Revenue Service to relentlessly disrupt the MLO.

OUTSTANDING COOPERATIVE EFFORT

MICHIGAN HIDTA

DEA Detroit HIDTA Group 6

Since September 2017, DEA Detroit HIDTA Group 6, working directly with the United States Customs and Border Protection, DEA Special Operations Division, and the Internal Revenue Service have been investigating the I7-18-0011 DTO, which is a TCO under OCDEF Task Force Operation Crash Landing. This investigation has been directly linked to CPOT GL-MIE-0566. To date, and as a direct result of this investigation, DEA Detroit HIDTA Group 6 investigators have seized well more than 6,000 kilograms of cocaine and \$13,444,597 in narcotic proceeds. This investigation is currently indicted in the Eastern District of Michigan. This investigation involves the highest level of sophisticated narcotic traffickers and money launders in the entire world. The use of private, fully-encrypted communication, international port corruption, and the exploitation of the United States banking system made the TCO a very difficult investigative target. Due to the overall team effort of HIDTA Group 6, investigators were able to dismantle and/or disrupt parts of both the narcotic and money laundering aspects of the TCO.

OUTSTANDING COOPERATIVE EFFORT

NEW MEXICO HIDTA

New Mexico HIDTA

In November 2019, Chaves County Metro Narcotics Task Force and DEA Roswell initiated an investigation into a DTO operating in the Roswell, New Mexico area. Over the course of the investigation, additional initiatives joined the investigative effort including Region VI-Pecos Valley Drug Task Force, Region VI-Lea County Drug Task Force, US Marshals Service, US Attorney's Office, and New Mexico State Police. During the investigation, agents identified that members of the DTO were responsible for the importation, transportation, and distribution of significant quantities of methamphetamine and fentanyl pills from Mexico to the entire southeastern portion of New Mexico. DTO members also utilized Roswell, NM as a hub to send illicit narcotics to other cities throughout the United States. Agents have linked this DTO to El Paso, TX; Ciudad Juarez, Mexico; Los Angeles, CA; San Diego, CA; Chicago, IL; and Tijuana, Mexico. As a result, new investigations have been initiated and are ongoing. Agents used the following investigative techniques: undercover agents, court-authorized telephone pings, court-authorized telephone interceptions, GPS trackers, physical surveillance, electronic surveillance, body worn transmitters, a concealed trap car initiative, license plate readers, controlled deliveries, roadside interdiction, grand jury subpoenas, financial investigators, federal search warrants, state search warrants, and confidential sources. After this investigation, the DTO was completely dismantled, and agents were able to initiate other investigations in other districts that are still ongoing.

OUTSTANDING COOPERATIVE EFFORT

NORTHWEST HIDTA

Seattle FBI Safe Street Task Force and Seattle DEA HIDTA Task Force

In fall 2019, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)'s Seattle Safe Streets Task Force, Seattle DEA HIDTA Task Force, and the Seattle Police Department commenced an investigation into a DTO composed of members from two Black Gangster Disciple street gang subsets, Union Street and Deuce 8. The investigation received Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force approval in May 2020. From July 2020 to March 2021, the investigative team conducted four rounds of Title III interceptions on 22 cell phones. The investigation culminated in two large-scale takedowns in April 2021 and June 2021 with searches at 60 locations. The operations enlisted the cooperation of more than 27 federal, state, and local agencies, consisting of more than 500 law enforcement personnel, and resulted in significant disruptions to both gangs and the dismantlement of the DTO. In total, 40 defendants were arrested and charged federally. Overall, the investigation resulted in the seizure of 140 firearms, 18 kilograms of cocaine, more than 55,000 M30/fentanyl pills, more than 350 kilograms of marijuana, and \$1,000,000 in cash. After these takedowns, community members took to social media to post about the community impact of the operation, including stating that "the feds did a clean sweep" and that "Union is dead." The takedowns also received widespread news coverage, focusing on the significant number of firearms and fentanyl pills seized, and the community and safety impact of those seizures.

OUTSTANDING INTERDICTION EFFORT

ARIZONA HIDTA

The Counter Narcotics Alliance Mid-Level Transportation Group

The Counter Narcotics Alliance (CNA) Mid-Level Transportation Group (MLTG), also known as the DEA Group 3, in its inaugural year in 2019, experienced great success focusing their interdiction efforts on shuttle van businesses and airport seizures. MLTG set goals in 2020 to expand their investigations to the Amtrak train, heavy freight, and local drug trafficking organizations (DTO) responsible for violent crime within Tucson and surrounding communities. The tangible results are reflected in the identification of a local DTO and numerous seizures and arrests: 420 pounds of high grade marijuana; 12,500 THC cartridges; seven quarts of raw THC oil; 1,200 packages of THC edibles; 142 one-gram containers of THC wax; 30,000 Xanax pills; 15 pounds of cocaine; 29 pounds of methamphetamine; 21 pounds of fentanyl powder; 10 pints of promethazine; \$2.5 million in cash; 8 vehicles; 23 firearms; and 25 arrests. MLTG's success is a direct result of the team's willingness to take the investigations beyond the initial seizure; work weekends, nights, and holidays; and utilize the services of the HIDTA Investigative Support Center. Through teamwork and perseverance, the MLTG contributed to improving the safety and quality of life for Tucson and its surrounding communities as well as the areas where the seized narcotics and drugs were headed.

OUTSTANDING INTERDICTION EFFORT

MIDWEST HIDTA

Kansas Interdiction Support Initiative, DEA Task Force Group 42A

In April 2021, the Kansas Interdiction Support Initiative completed its second year as a DEA task force group. This group was established in 2019 to bridge the gap between the interdiction cases initiated by the Kansas Interdiction Support Initiative (Kansas Highway Patrol) and long-term complex conspiracy investigations being conducted by the DEA's Kansas City/Overland Park DEA Task Force Initiative. During federal fiscal year (FY) 2021 (October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021), the Initiative excelled in achieving its expanded mission. The Initiative's interdiction and investigative efforts supported not only DEA's investigations, but also other federal, state and local law enforcement entities across the country in advancing their investigations, illuminating actionable intelligence and obtaining prosecutorial evidence against the transportation components of numerous significant DTOs/MLOs. These efforts resulted in conducting 290 Domestic Highway Enforcement operations, the initiation of 103 DEA investigations, 480 arrests and the seizure of 267.4 kilograms of methamphetamine/Ice, 62.4 kilograms of fentanyl, 28 kilograms of cocaine, 14.5 kilograms of heroin, 2,640.9 kilograms of marijuana and assets valued at \$1,787,778. Additionally, the Initiative conducted 14 controlled deliveries.

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY IMPACT INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

SOUTH TEXAS HIDTA

Austin Area HIDTA Task Force - Tactical Diversion Squad

The Austin Area HIDTA TF Tactical Diversion Squad targeted an interstate counterfeit pharmaceutical and hallucinogen trafficking network using encrypted apps and social media to market and sell drugs to college students, military personnel, and others at the University of Texas at Austin, University of Texas San Antonio, and military bases. Operation Spyder Web Takedowns 1 and 2 led to the arrests of 22 defendants and the seizure of approximately 400,000 dosage units of LSD, 3,000 dosage units of ketamine, 33 kilograms of psilocybin mushrooms, 735 cannabis plants, 100,000 tablets of Xanax, more than 200,000 dosage units of Adderall, approximately \$480,000 in cash, three real properties (\$1,344,000), one vehicle, and ten firearms by the Austin District Office Tactical Diversion Squad (TDS). This was one of the first investigations in the greater Austin area that discovered after lab analysis that the counterfeit pharmaceuticals were laced with fentanyl.

Operation Spyder Web involved collaboration with the FBI, Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS), IRS, United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) and other DEA offices to include San Francisco, Oklahoma, Portland, New York, and San Antonio.

The Austin Area HIDTA TF Tactical Diversion Squad is comprised of two DEA Special Agents, two DEA Diversion Investigators, one DEA Intelligence Research Specialist and four Task Force Officers (TFOs) representing the Austin, Lakeway, and Travis County areas of Texas. It also includes two case-specific TFOs from Cedar Park, Texas.

OUTSTANDING VIOLENT ORGANIZATION INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

CENTRAL FLORIDA HIDTA

Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation

From 2019-2021, Central Florida experienced a dramatic spike in violent crime, homicides, and drive-by shootings that were a result of gang violence driven by drug trafficking. As the violence between the gangs escalated, not only were gang members being murdered, but multiple innocent juveniles were killed as they were caught in the crossfire. Between September 2019 and June 2021, the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI), in conjunction with DEA, FBI Safe Streets Task Force, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), the Orange County Sheriff's Office Homicide and Gang Units, and the Orlando Police Department Homicide Unit, launched a series of investigations targeting four separate gangs operating as DTOs. The results of the investigations were three DTOs dismantled or disrupted, 56 arrests (33 defendants were leaders or prominent gang members). MBI investigators seized 22 firearms, including 2 that were connected to the murder of a 16-year-old innocent female, 14 automatic sears, 4.5 kilograms of fentanyl, 5 kilograms of cocaine, 21 kilograms of marijuana, \$1.1 million in currency, jewelry, and vehicles, and the clearance of 4 homicides.

OUTSTANDING PUBLIC HEALTH/PUBLIC SAFETY COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

ARIZONA HIDTA

Shelly Mowrey, Arizona HIDTA Demand Reduction Coordinator, and Merilee Fowler, Executive Director, MATFORCE

With the alarming rise of fentanyl and counterfeit pill deaths in Arizona, substance use prevention coalitions from across Arizona are working together in a first-of-its-kind effort to save lives in Arizona. Under the leadership of Arizona HIDTA Demand Reduction Coordinator Shelly Mowrey and MATFORCE Executive Director Merilee Fowler, the project team created a comprehensive toolkit with top-quality resources to aid communities in raising awareness of fentanyl and preventing and reversing overdoses. All materials can be personalized and downloaded in either English or Spanish. The team created materials for a statewide media blitz which ran across Arizona through the summer months, which is when Arizona typically has the most overdose deaths. The work of Ms. Mowrey and Ms. Fowler, along with the substance use prevention coalitions from across Arizona, have brought much-needed education to the state to save lives.

OUTSTANDING INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SHARING

HOUSTON HIDTA

Houston Investigative Support Center

The Houston Investigative Support Center (HISC) is the intelligence centerpiece of the Houston HIDTA. Sponsored by the FBI and co-managed by the Houston Police Department, other participants include the DEA, HSI, ATF, Harris County Sheriff's Office, and HIDTA-funded contractors. The HISC provides a full spectrum of investigative and intelligence services tailored to the needs of the Houston HIDTA law enforcement community. These services include short and long-term case support; a regional overdose response and overdose information clearinghouse; post-seizure analysis; financial analysis with Financial Crimes Enforcement Network Suspicious Activity Report (FinCEN SAR) reviews; a multiagency deconfliction triage team focused on quickly identifying and connecting CPOT, RPOT, and OCDETF links to investigations; communication exploitation services; the creation of, and making available to law enforcement agencies in the region, a SharePoint database for information gleaned from overdoses and investigations; the management and interconnectivity of ten separate StopDrugs websites covering the entire Houston HIDTA; the administration, user management, and training coordination for the National HIDTA License Plate Reader projects; and strategic intelligence services that include special assessments based on new and emerging threats.

OUTSTANDING OVERDOSE INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

NEW ENGLAND HIDTA

Southern New Hampshire HIDTA Task Force

In 2015, the New England HIDTA Executive Board, responding swiftly to the heroin/fentanyl epidemic plaguing the region, established a Heroin/Fentanyl Strike Force at the Southern New Hampshire HIDTA Task Force. The Strike Force is comprised of three local police department detectives, a DEA agent, and a prosecutor from the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office. The mission of the Strike Force is to respond and investigate overdose deaths throughout New Hampshire, assist and train local police departments on overdose death investigations, and provide them with the tools they need to prosecute these cases in their cities and towns. The ultimate goal of this initiative was to identify, target and prosecute fentanyl distributors who are marketing this dangerous substance responsible for those overdose deaths. A part of this process was the creation of a DEA Overdose Hotline which allows law enforcement to alert the Strike Force of a fatal drug overdose, enabling members to begin the investigative process. Since its inception, the Strike Force has engaged in numerous "Death Resulting" cases, has seized multiple kilograms of fentanyl and fentanyl "mills," and has initiated numerous Title III wiretap investigations targeting heroin and fentanyl drug trafficking organizations.

OUTSTANDING OVERDOSE INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT

SAN DIEGO-IMPERIAL VALLEY HIDTA

San Diego County HIDTA Narcotics Task Force Team 10

The San Diego County HIDTA Narcotics Task Force Team 10 (Team 10) was created in response to the drastic increase in overdose deaths countywide, particularly due to fentanyl and other opioids. Team 10 created a unified law enforcement response to overdose deaths in San Diego County and is comprised of Special Agents from Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the DEA, the FBI, and California Health Care Services, as well as law enforcement from the San Diego Police Department, and San Diego District Attorney's Office Bureau of Investigation.

The multi-departmental enforcement strategies used by Team 10 hold those that deal in fentanyl accountable for opioid deaths. Overdose investigations in which a distributor is positively identified, are referred for state or federal prosecution on Distribution Causing Death charges. Team 10 works in conjunction with state and federal prosecutors to enforce these criminal charges and address the dangers of the opioid epidemic facing not only the San Diego area, but surrounding communities statewide. Nationally, nearly every community has seen a significant spike in opioid abuse and overdose deaths within the recent years. Team 10 has become the leading national model by which other law enforcement agencies and HIDTAs design their opioid task forces. Team 10 members are experts in the field and advise in a multitude of areas such as testing, handling, identifying, and mitigating emergency incidents.

MARY MARSHALL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING HIDTA SUPPORT STAFF

WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE HIDTA

Ramona Boland, Training Program Manager

During the worldwide pandemic, Ramona Boland's commitment to developing, implementing, and evaluating a variety of innovative training curricula in a more-than-timely fashion resulted in the provision of world-class, online training to HIDTA personnel in treatment, law enforcement and prevention, and to HIDTA personnel from numerous HIDTAs across the country. The application of the knowledge, skills, and abilities unquestionably enhanced productivity and collaboration in our HIDTA, and among numerous HIDTAs.

After quickly mastering the learning management system, TalentLMS, Ms. Boland developed and delivered numerous training programs including, but not limited to, Case Explorer Gen 3, an easy-to-navigate training webpage on the W/B HIDTA's website (www.hidta.org), an online "HIDTA Box" with supplemental training materials, and 16,568 hours of training under her leadership during the constraints of the pandemic.

OUTSTANDING INTELLIGENCE ANALYST

WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE HIDTA

Casey Dillard, Intelligence Analyst

Washington/Baltimore HIDTA Intelligence Analyst Casey Dillard is a very conscientious worker with a great attention to detail. Analyst Dillard has proven to be an extraordinarily quick learner with the special ability to make pertinent case connections amongst a variety of structured and unstructured data sets. During her relatively short time as an analyst with the W/B HIDTA, Analyst Dillard has shown leadership skills while becoming a trustworthy analyst and mentor for many newer and experienced analysts within the Investigative Support Center (ISC). While striving to achieve the most individually, Analyst Dillard has also shown the leadership skills necessary in her consideration of how ISC case support can be maximized to meet the mission and goals of the HIDTA program. During the award period, she supported 16 large-scale investigations with comprehensive analytical support, nine of which were Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigations. Analyst Dillard's analytical products assisted a particular investigation that led to the seizure of \$380,000, 1,300 grams of heroin/fentanyl, 190 grams of cocaine, 12 arrests, and 13 firearms, one of which assisted in solving a double homicide. She manages many projects to ensure the success of the ISC, such as the Security Threat Group Report and the ISC Pen-Link PLX that connects 40 different groups across the region, allowing for enhanced information sharing and analysis.

OUTSTANDING PROSECUTOR

TEXOMA HIDTA

Anna Marie Bell, Assistant U.S. Attorney, Northern District of Texas - Amarillo Division

Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA) Anna Marie Bell, assigned to the Amarillo Division of the Northern District of Texas, has been supporting the Texas Panhandle HIDTA Task Force through her exemplary prosecution of federal drug cases. Her aggressive and diligent work has resulted in successful prosecutions of numerous drug traffickers and resulted in lengthy prison sentences for those traffickers. Despite an overwhelming caseload, AUSA Bell maintains the highest standards of ethics, integrity, law, and justice. Her efforts have directly contributed to a safer Amarillo community.

AUSA Bell's dedication to justice and the citizens of the Panhandle has removed hundreds of violent and dangerous offenders from the Amarillo community and surrounding area. AUSA Bell accomplishes this by ensuring defendants receive lengthy sentences in federal prison and, thus, can no longer cause harm to the citizens of the Texas Panhandle. AUSA Bell's efforts were part of a 38% decrease in violent crime in the Project Safe Neighborhoods area through the first three quarters of 2020 compared to 2019, and a 4% decrease overall for the rest of Amarillo.

HIDTA AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

TEXOMA HIDTA

Tyler T. Rawdon, DEA Special Agent, Central Oklahoma Task Force

In April 2021, Special Agent (SA) Tyler T. Rawdon, Central Oklahoma Task Force (COTF) HIDTA, initiated and directed an investigation into a Mexican-based TCO ultimately determined to be responsible for the importation of significant kilogram-quantities of cocaine and methamphetamine utilizing land conveyances which enter the Presidio/Ojinaga International Port of Entry along the Texas/Chihuahua, Mexico border. The organization was significantly tied to and took command and control directions from a Mexican-based TCO. The organization was responsible for storing bulk quantities of cocaine and methamphetamine at Oklahoma City-based stash locations, which are then distributed by TCO members in the COTF HIDTA area-of-responsibility (AOR) and multiple cities and states within the United States. SA Rawdon collaborated across jurisdictional boundaries (coalition building) leading to successful information sharing, arrests, and significant seizures. Additionally, SA Rawdon, through his direction, leadership, and use of innovative investigative techniques, identified and targeted the repatriation of narcotics proceeds back to Mexico-based command and control leaders in Chihuahua, Mexico, seizing remarkable amounts of narcotics proceeds.

SA Rawdon utilized necessary enforcement tools and innovative techniques to investigate and ultimately disrupt and/or dismantle this Mexican-based TCO. From July through October 2021, SA Rawdon conducted five Title-III intercepts. To date, the ongoing HIDTA investigation has led to eight primary arrests; five Title-IIIs; 14 Pens; ten Pings; multiple search warrants/arrest warrants; more than \$845,000 in cash (expected to reach more than \$1,000,000); more than \$70,000 in vehicle seizures; over \$3,000 in electronic equipment; multiple weapons (including a 50-caliber Barrett Sniper Rifle); more than 30 kilograms of cocaine; more than 30 kilograms of methamphetamine; 1.5 kilograms of fentanyl; a crack cocaine conversion lab, etc. Lastly, through SA Rawdon's collaborative efforts, other jurisdictions seized the following totals: 22 kilograms of cocaine, 36 kilograms of marijuana, multiple weapons, several arrests, and \$156,665 in cash.

OUTSTANDING INITIATIVE COMMANDER

PUERTO RICO-U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS HIDTA

Raul Crespo, Group Supervisor, Caribbean Anti-Money Laundering Alliance

During Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21), Group Supervisor (GS) Raul Crespo of the Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands HIDTA's Caribbean Anti-Money Laundering Alliance (CMLA) spearheaded a program that would go on to use Customs authority that significantly expanded the data available in the Southwest Border Transaction Record Analysis Center (TRAC). GS Crespo was able to identify an intelligence and investigative gap in the role money service businesses (MSB) play with regards to money laundering in PR and the USVI. MSBs are well known to be vulnerable to exploitation by transnational criminal organizations (TCO). TCOs can quickly and efficiently transfer illicit funds worldwide through MSBs with little effort. GS Crespo saw a potential remedy in the TRAC which arose from a 2014 Settlement Agreement Amendment between the Arizona Attorney General and Western Union to effectively set up a mechanism to monitor MSB transactions along the U.S. southern border. The result was a database and secure internet interface referred to by the same name. TRAC soon became a complement to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network Portal which captures Bank Secrecy Act filings. Through the innovation, creativity, and foresight of CMLA Initiative Commander GS Crespo, TRAC now benefits from an additional stream of millions of financial transaction records.

HIDTA OF THE YEAR

NORTHWEST HIDTA

The Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program, like its peers nationwide, has demonstrated its commitment to reducing the supply of illicit drugs throughout its area of responsibility. Through the 20 enforcement initiatives it supports throughout Washington State, it successfully disrupted or dismantled 69 drug trafficking or money laundering organizations in 2021, and seized more than \$110 million in drugs, and nearly 600 firearms.

Under the leadership of Executive Director Jonathan Weiner and the Executive Board, the Northwest HIDTA has embodied the spirit of stewardship that is critical to good governance. Director Weiner has led a transformation of his program. He has ensured that every dollar is invested – or reinvested – deliberately to target the threats facing the HIDTA region and to advance the goals of the National HIDTA Program and the Office of National Drug Control Policy. He has brought together an exemplary team within the HIDTA and fostered a workplace culture that has allowed his staff to maximize their particular talents.

The Northwest HIDTA is an outstanding example of dedication to the HIDTA mission and conscientious leadership. In recognition of its accomplishments and ongoing support to advancing the goals of the National HIDTA Program, the Northwest HIDTA is the HIDTA of the Year for 2022.

In Memoriam



Michael G. Garbo
Supervisory Special Agent

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration Tucson District Office

Supervisory Special Agent Michael Garbo was born in Grayville, Illinois on February 10, 1970. He graduated from Eastern Illinois University and also served with the U.S. Army National Guard. In 1993, he started his law enforcement career as a police officer for the Metro Nashville Police Department in Tennessee. While at the Metro Nashville Police Department, Supervisory Special Agent Garbo served in specialized assignments to include interdiction and SWAT. In January 2005, Supervisory Special Agent Garbo joined the DEA, and after graduating the DEA Academy in Quantico, Virginia, he was transferred to the Nogales Resident Office. He quickly became one of the most respected agents in the office and his pursuit of excellence in all aspects of his career was relentless. Supervisory Special Agent Garbo, then an agent, built a reputation for discipline and dedication to duty and became a mentor for all new agents as they began their careers. He was the mentor that was never too busy to take a moment and share his experience, knowledge and guidance for those who were willing to seek his advice.

In 2009, he volunteered for an overseas assignment and was transferred to the Kabul Country Office in Afghanistan. Supervisory Special Agent Garbo continued his commitment to the DEA Mission and served in Afghanistan for two years. Through this experience, he worked alongside and embedded with a multinational operational unit whose mission was to eliminate the illicit drug trade in the foreign country. While his experience in the foreign arena was one of the highlights of his career, he returned to Southern Arizona in 2011.

In Memoriam

He was soon after promoted to a supervisory special agent and assigned to lead DEA personnel in the HIDTA Counter Narcotics Alliance (CNA) multi-agency task force focused on mid-level drug traffickers and interdiction. The CNA Border Interdiction Group/Mid-Level Transportation Group conducted a multitude of commercial transportation interdiction investigations targeting subjects exploiting public transportation venues to distribute illicit drugs and other contraband to destinations across the U.S. Supervisory Special Agent Garbo and his agents worked in partnership with a Tucson Police Department sergeant and detectives to collaboratively, become one of the most productive and successful interdiction groups in the southwest.

Supervisory Special Agent Garbo was a trusted leader and he helped his group in identifying trends in trafficking and proactively pursued investigations to disrupt noticeable increases in drug related crime and violence. Recognizing an opportunity to expand their interdiction operations, Supervisory Special Agent Garbo and the group expanded their presence to include Amtrak Police and train stations. Well known across the DEA for liaison and networking, he developed a crucial partnership with Amtrak Police, who through collaborative efforts, identified couriers who used the rail service to transport drugs and drug proceeds. In Fiscal Year 2021, the CNA Border Interdiction Group initiated 53 investigations, arrested 44 individuals on drug related charges, seized 34 kilograms of cocaine, 16.5 kilograms of heroin, 39.3 kilograms of fentanyl, 906 pounds of methamphetamine, 28,962 pounds of marijuana, and \$2,826,812 in cash and assets. In short, GS Garbo and his team did everything they could to make Tucson and the surrounding areas a better place.

On October 4, 2021, Supervisory Special Agent Garbo and his CNA team deployed to the Tucson Amtrak station to conduct a routine interdiction operation. The Sunset Limited, Train 2, was traveling to New Orleans from Los Angeles when it arrived in Tucson, early that morning. Recognizing indicators of illicit drug trafficking and following the immediate investigation including a K-9 alert, Supervisory Special Agent Garbo along with another agent and task force officer were ambushed by a man when they approached him on the train. Supervisory Special Agent Garbo perished at the hand of a trafficker who was later found to have a violent criminal history. There will be no better example of greatness and nor of sacrifice for the Tucson area.



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