



News Releases

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ICE executes federal search warrant at Pacific Beach restaurant *Enforcement action is part of ongoing probe*

SAN DIEGO- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents executed a federal search warrant today at a locally owned French restaurant and catering service, arresting 18 of the company's workers on administrative immigration violations.

The search warrant, which remains under seal because the investigation is ongoing, was executed early this morning at the French Gourmet on Turquoise Street.

All of the workers arrested today are being interviewed, fingerprinted and photographed by ICE agents and processed for removal. Those who contest their deportation will be provided with an opportunity to see a judge in the immigration court.

"Today's worksite enforcement action is part of ICE's ongoing nationwide effort to shut down the employment magnet fueling illegal immigration," said Miguel Unzueta, special agent in charge for ICE investigations in San Diego.

Those arrested today are also being interviewed by ICE agents to elicit information about possible health, caregiver or other humanitarian issues, and to identify any urgent medical needs. The information aids ICE in making decisions about whether to detain an individual or permit a conditional humanitarian release.

All of the workers arrested today are Mexican nationals. The group includes three women and 15 men. The three females were released on humanitarian grounds and scheduled for follow-up removal processing interviews. The remaining workers will be transferred to the ICE contract detention facility in Otay Mesa, operated by Corrections Corporation of America (CCA).

Family members of those arrested today may call ICE at 619-557-5802 or 5758 for information about their relative's custody status. In addition, ICE contacted the local Mexican Consulate to provide information about today's enforcement activity.

Since its establishment in 2003, ICE has dramatically enhanced its efforts to combat the unlawful employment of illegal aliens in this country. ICE's comprehensive strategy for worksite

enforcement is aimed at promoting national security and public safety, protecting critical infrastructure, and ensuring fair labor standards.

In fiscal year 2007, ICE made more than 4,900 arrests in connection with worksite enforcement investigations, including 863 involving criminal violations. That represents a 45-fold increase in criminal worksite arrests compared to fiscal year 2001. In addition, ICE obtained more than \$31 million in criminal fines, restitutions and civil judgments in fiscal year 2007 as a result of worksite related enforcement actions.

-- ICE --

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.

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