

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

News Releases

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ICE arrests 11 gang members and associates in Madison, Wis., area

MADISON, Wis. - Agents with the local U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), in close partnership with the Madison Police Department (MPD), arrested 11 illegal alien gang members and gang associates on Tuesday. This is the latest joint local action of an ongoing national ICE HSI effort to target foreign-born members of violent street gangs.

The arrests were made Aug. 11 under an initiative by ICE's National Gang Unit dubbed "Operation Community Shield." As part of the initiative, ICE partners with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies across the country to target the significant public safety threat posed by transnational street gangs. Partnerships with local law enforcement agencies are essential to the initiative's success, and they help further ensure officer safety during the operations.

All 11 men arrested are members or associates of the Chicano Pride and C-14 street gangs; all are Mexican nationals. They have been charged with administrative immigration violations and are being processed for deportation. Five of those arrested have previous criminal convictions in addition to their immigration violations. Some of their arrests and convictions include: carrying a concealed weapon, resisting or obstructing a police officer, battery, theft and criminal damage to property. For privacy reasons, ICE does not release the names of those arrested on administrative immigration charges.

In addition to the Madison Police Department, ICE received assistance from the following agencies: the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Wisconsin; and the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS).

"Street gangs pose a growing public safety threat to communities in the Madison area," said Gary Hartwig, special agent in charge of the ICE HSI office in Chicago. "With each gang member we arrest and remove from the United States, we're making a positive impact in our communities and improving public safety."

"The arrests during this joint operation with ICE are consistent with what the MPD has stated in the past: we are focused on removing violent gang members from the streets of Madison," said Madison Police Chief Noble Wray. "It is a matter of public safety, and we will work in concert with federal authorities to diminish potential threats. This in no way; however, changes our approach and philosophy in dealing with other members of our immigrant communities."

ICE's National Gang Unit identifies violent street gangs and develops intelligence on their membership, associates, criminal activities and international movements to deter, disrupt and dismantle gang operations by tracing and seizing cash, weapons and other assets derived from criminal activities.

Through Operation Community Shield, the federal government uses its powerful immigration and customs law enforcement authorities in a coordinated, national campaign against criminal street gangs in the United States. Transnational street gangs have significant numbers of foreign-born members and are frequently involved in human and contraband smuggling, immigration violations and other crimes with a connection to the border.

Since ICE began Operation Community Shield in February 2005, more than 18,000 gang members and associates belonging to more than 900 different gangs have been arrested nationwide.

The public is encouraged to report suspicious activity by calling the ICE toll-free hotline at: 1-866-347-2423. This hotline is staffed around the clock.