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Undercover Ohio ICAC Operation Results in the Arrest of 22 Online Offenders

CLEVELAND, OH – Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael C. O'Malley announced the arrest of 22 individuals as part of "Operation Memorial Dazed," a four-day undercover operation led by the Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (Ohio ICAC). The operation served to identify and arrest individuals interested in engaging in sexual activity with whom they believed to be minor children.

The individuals, all men, engaged in sexually-explicit online conversations with undercover task force officers who posed as minor children. Contact was made through online advertisements, mobile applications, or social networking websites. The individuals expressed an interest in engaging in sexual activity and/or disseminated images of their genitals during these conversations.

After the online conversations, the individuals traveled to a vacant apartment complex in Newburgh Heights, which served as an undercover location. Upon their arrival, they were arrested without incident by the task force. Several individuals were in possession of condoms and personal lubricant.

They could face felony charges of Attempted Unlawful Sexual Conduct with a Minor, Importuning, and Possessing Criminal misdemeanor. Their cases will be presented to a Cuyahoga County Grand Jury.

The arrested individuals include:

- Philip Oliveira, 26, Cleveland, OH
- Nanda Poudel, 27, Parma Heights, OH
- Gary Koepke, 65, Cleveland, OH
- Shawn Reinke, 27, Medina, OH
- Khaled Morra, 22, Wadsworth, OH
- Anthony Loignon, 49, Richardson, TX
- Brandon Gardner, 34, Vermilion, OH
- William Browning Jr., 45, West Salem, OH
- Joseph Pullella, 51, Akron, OH
- Yun Cao, 20, Hudson, OH
- Hemang Bhanushali, 32, Northfield, OH
- Scott Turner, 48, Cleveland, OH
- Gregory Echelberry, 37, Massillon, OH
- David Dinard, 29, Cleveland, OH
- Zachary Albert, 24, North Canton, OH
- Ronald Richardson, 31, Cleveland, OH
- Jackson Studzinski, 23, Oberlin, OH
- Jose Rovelo, 50, Cleveland, OH
- Matthew Palmer, 42, Navarre, OH
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Operation Memorial Dazed was coordinated by Ohio ICAC Force with the assistance of the Newburgh Heights Police Department, the Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations, the Solon Police Department, the Austintown Township Police Department, the Streetsboro Police Department, the Cleveland Police Department, the Ohio Attorney General’s Office, Bureau of Criminal Investigations and Criminal Intelligence Unit, the United States Secret Service, and the United States Attorney’s Office.

The Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force is run under the direction of the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office and funded in part by a grant from the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The task force conducts proactive and reactive investigations dealing with the online exploitation of children and provides training and technical assistance to more than 350 local, state and federal criminal justice affiliated agencies throughout the state of Ohio.

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