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MEDIA RELEASE JANUARY 23, 2017

JOINT INVESTIGATION LEADS TO MULTIPLE ARRESTS OF EDNA MAHAN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY DOC PERSONNEL ON OFFICIAL MISCONDUCT AND SEXUAL ASSAULT CHARGES

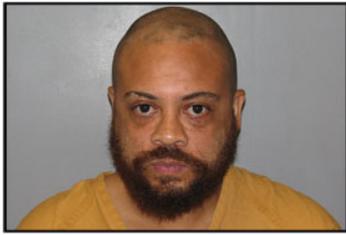
Hunterdon County Prosecutor Anthony P. Kearns, III, and Chief of Detectives John J. Kuczynski announced the indictments of four Correction Officers after a joint investigation by the Hunterdon County Prosecutor's Special Victim's Unit and the New Jersey Department of Corrections Special Investigations Division. Edna Mahan Correctional Facility Senior Corrections Officers Jason Mays, Ahnwar Dixon, Brian Ambrose and Thomas Seguire have been indicted for a total of 26 counts in relation to the sexual abuse of 8 female inmates. All have been indicted for official misconduct and charges related to sexual abuse. Mays and Dixon are additionally charged with committing a pattern of official misconduct based on their multiple victims.

Prosecutor Kearns stated, "The collaboration between the Hunterdon County Prosecutor's Office and the Department of Corrections Special Investigations Division was vital to the success of the investigation and I commend the Department of Corrections for their steadfast dedication to the pursuit of justice. We will continue to work together to prosecute those who violate the public trust."

NJ Department of Corrections Commissioner Gary M. Lanigan stated, "Offenders and their families have every reason to trust that individuals in the custody of the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) will be effectively supervised and appropriately treated while incarcerated. Violators of that trust should not and will not be taken lightly. The overwhelming majority of the NJDOC staff is hard-working, fair-minded and law-abiding. However, a small number of employees can undermine of integrity of the entire criminal justice system. Every member of our staff knows that if he or she acts in an unlawful manner, then he or she should not be working for the NJDOC and is subject to the legal ramifications of that behavior."

Prosecutor Kearns added, "We have in our society a system of punishing those who violate our laws. And when imprisonment is the punishment, it is our correction officers that must carry out the duty of ensuring the welfare, safety and security of the inmates they are employed to supervise. All inmates have a right to be safe within the institutions where we as a society demand they be detained. All inmates should be free of sexual abuse regardless of their crime."

Office of the Hunterdon County Prosecutor



Jason Mays

Anthony P. Kearns, III



Ahnwar Dixon



Joel Herscap



Brian Ambroise



Thomas Seguire

On January 19, 2017, the Hunterdon Grand Jury returned the following indictments:

Jason Mays, age 43 of Hillside, NJ, has been employed by the New Jersey Department of Corrections as a Senior Correction Officer since May of 2005. Mays was indicted on five counts of Official Misconduct, one count of Pattern of Official Misconduct, and three counts of Sexual Assault, all second degree crimes, two counts of Criminal Coercion, third degree crimes and four counts of Criminal Sexual Contact, fourth degree crimes.

Ahnwar Dixon, age 38, of East Orange, NJ, has been employed by the New Jersey Department of Corrections as a Senior Correction Officer since November of 2004. Dixon was indicted on two counts of Official Misconduct, one count of Pattern of Official Misconduct, one count of Sexual Assault, all second degree crimes, and three counts of Criminal Sexual Contact, all fourth degree crimes.

Brian Y. Ambroise, age 33, of Union, NJ, has been employed by the New Jersey Department of Corrections as a Senior Correction Officer since March of 2013. Ambrose was indicted on one count of Official Misconduct and Sexual Assault, both second degree crimes.

Thomas Seguire, age 34, of Phillipsburg, NJ, has been employed by the New Jersey Department of Corrections as a Senior Correction Officer since December of 2008. Seguire was indicted on one count of Official Misconduct and Sexual Assault, both second degree crimes.

Joel Herscap, age 55, of Alpha, NJ, was employed as an Institutional Trade Instructor for the Department of Corrections from September of 2003 till his arrest in May of 2016. Herscap pled guilty on October 31, 2016 to one count of Official Misconduct, a second degree crime, for having a sexual encounter with an additional victim. Herscap was sentenced to three years in state prison.

Prosecutor Kearns added, "The public trust is violated and everyone is betrayed when a sworn law enforcement officer violates the oath he or she has vowed to uphold. Clearly, the 9 women who were victimized by Officers Mays, Dixon, Ambroise, Seguire and Institutional Instructor Herscap, were betrayed. Sexual abuse of inmates compromises the safety and security of prisons in general because it leads to a weakening of authority within the institution which gives way to other dangers. Also betrayed is the public at large who employed these defendants to perform a vital function of our criminal justice system. The public is betrayed any time a public servant uses their position to violate the very laws they

are sworn to uphold, as in the case of these defendants. There is an expectation that public officials will faithfully perform their duties and will not turn a blind eye to any illegal activity. This is an ongoing investigation and we will prosecute any further acts of misconduct we identify. It is the duty of every sworn law enforcement officer to come forward with information of officer misconduct and failure to do so is a breach of the public trust.”

Prosecutor Kearns concluded, “In these cases, the victims were particularly vulnerable. The Corrections Officers had complete power over every aspect of their lives behind bars. These cases demonstrate the mission of the Hunterdon County Prosecutor’s Office to fairly and aggressively investigate all suspected violations of our criminal code, with priority given to crimes of this nature. Justice demands we do so, regardless of who the victim is and no matter who the perpetrator.”

The filing of a criminal complaint is merely a step in the criminal justice process. The defendants are presumed innocent until the matter is resolved in a court of law.

Anyone with information for law enforcement can submit anonymous tips by calling Crime Stoppers at 1-800-321-0010 or by going to www.crimestoppershunterdon.com, or text messaging “HCTIPS” plus your tip message to 274637 (CRIMES). Tipsters can also download the free mobile app “Tipsubmit” and select Hunterdon County to submit anonymous tips via text messaging. All tips are anonymous and kept confidential.

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