



Fresno County Sheriff's Office

John Zanoni, Sheriff

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News Release

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Detectives Arrest Possible T.D.A. Gang Members for Robbery Spree

The Area 3 Property Crimes Unit and detectives with the Multi-Agency Gang Enforcement Consortium (M.A.G.E.C.) have arrested five suspects involved in four robberies, which occurred over the course of two weeks during the summer of 2024.

Those booked into the Fresno County Jail are 31 year old Anderson Vega Laya, 29 year old Helan Lopez Sanchez, 25 year old Aaron Sojo Moreno, 22 year old Yan Garcia-Heredia and 19 year old Albert Hinegues. They face a variety of felony charges related to robbery and illegal firearms possession. All lived in Mendota, however, Anderson, Yan, Helan and Aaron are originally from Venezuela. Detectives have developed information that they may be connected to Tren de Aragua (T.D.A.), a violent Venezuelan gang.

Around 10:00 pm on August 4, 2024, three masked men committed an armed robbery at a taco stand located along Highway 33, just north of the city of Mendota. They stole money from the business owner and also took a Jeep and personal belongings from two customers.

Ten minutes later on that same night, the suspects ambushed a man near Highway 33 and Barstow Avenue. They held the man at gunpoint, stole his Honda Accord and left the Jeep behind. The next day, deputies found the Honda abandoned.

Shortly before 4:30 pm on August 9, 2024, three masked men with guns robbed the Shasta Market located west of the city of Kerman. They stole cash from the register and fled in a 2014 Ford C-Max.

At 2:15 pm on August 16, 2024, the same Ford C-Max arrived at Buhler Country Store, located at 1473 S. Lyon Avenue in Mendota. Four masked gunmen took cash from the register.

On August 20, deputies found the Ford C-Max on fire in a rural area of Mendota. Detectives developed information that helped them identify people with ties to the car.

In early September 2024, detectives and the Sheriff's SWAT team conducted search warrants that resulted in the collection of evidence linked to the robbery scenes. Detectives arrested Albert Hinegues and Anderson Vega in early January.

In mid-January, detectives developed information that Helan Lopez was at a Motel 6 located at Highway 99 and Shaw Ave. in Fresno. A SWAT operation was carried out to take him into custody. During this time, Lopez refused to exit the room. Armed with an AR-15 style rifle, Sanchez pointed it toward the door of the room and pulled the trigger several times. Thankfully, due to a firearm malfunction, none of the rounds fired. Deputies eventually took Sanchez safely into custody.

Detectives continued to search for Aaron Sojo Moreno and issued an arrest warrant for him. In February, they learned law enforcement had taken him into custody in Colorado. He went through the extradition process and deputies with the Fresno County Sheriff's Transportation Unit traveled to Colorado to get him. Sojo Moreno was booked into the Fresno County Jail on April 11 for robbery charges.

FSO and Mendota Police detectives later served an unrelated residential search warrant in the City of Mendota. Yan Garcia-Heredia was located at the home and taken into custody related to the robbery series.

This investigation's success was made possible through the collaboration and support of Area 2 & 3 property detectives, M.A.G.E.C., the Ag Task Force, the Vice Unit, SWAT, Mendota Police, California Highway Patrol, FSO I-Bureau, FSO Crime Analysts and the FSO Air Support Unit.

If you have additional information about any of these suspects or cases, please contact the Sheriff's Office at (559) 600-3111. You may also contact Valley Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-7867, www.valleycrimestoppers.org You will remain anonymous and may be eligible for a cash reward. Reference case #25-9390.