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NEWS RELEASE –

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DENVER GRAND JURY INDICTS 10 IN ALLGED METRO AREA MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT/HOME BURGLARY CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE Multiple Agencies Collaborate in Investigation

A Denver Grand Jury has returned an 85-count indictment against 10 people in connection with a criminal enterprise involving the theft of over \$300,000 in property from homes and over \$240,000 worth of motor vehicles in robberies and burglaries throughout the Denver metro area.

The indictment is the result of a months-long investigation and collaboration by the Denver District Attorney's Economic Crime Unit, the CATPA Metropolitan Auto Theft Task Force, and the Denver, Aurora, Lakewood, Wheat Ridge, Golden, Cherry Hill Village, Englewood, and Sheridan Police Departments, the Adams, Arapahoe, Douglas, Jefferson and Boulder County Sheriff's Offices, the Rangely, Colorado Police Department, and the Uintah County, Utah Sheriff's Office.

Alleged ringleaders **Dominic Crews** (dob: 06-30-1995), **Sean Ryan Garcia** (01-13-1991), **Joseph Moralez** (dob: 09-11-1995), and **Brenton Sjostrom** (dob: 10-31-1988) are each charged with one count of violation of the *Colorado Organized Crime Control Act-COCCA* (F2). They and six other co-defendants are additionally variously charged with other felonies, including *burglary* (F3, F4), *theft* (F4, F5, F6), *aggravated motor vehicle theft* (F4, F5), *possession of a weapon by a previous offender* (F6), *identity theft* (F4), and *aggravated robbery* (F3). The indictment was handed down May 2, 2018.

The other six co-defendants are: **Kiara Ewald** (dob: 03-02-1994), **Francisco Gutierrez** (dob: 06-01-1980), **Shenea Medina** (dob: 10-08-1990), **Benito Reyes** (dob: 09-07-1991), **Ebony Salcido** (dob: 05-26-1989), and **Joseph Velasquez** (dob: 08-06-1991).

The indictment alleges that between May and September 2017, the defendants variously stole at least 13 motor vehicles and burglarized over 20 residences, stealing such items as firearms, electronics, cash, clothing, jewelry, credit and debit cards, and checks. The criminal activity occurred primarily in Denver and in Jefferson County (including Englewood, Golden and Lakewood), but also in Boulder, Douglas and Arapahoe Counties, and in Vernal, UT.

The defendants and associates allegedly traded or sold the stolen property in order to obtain drugs, including, but not limited to, heroin and methamphetamine.

The various defendants allegedly gained entry to the dwellings by breaking windows or glass doors, but also through pet doors, and in one incident, by knocking on the door of a residence claiming they had run out of gas and then forcing their way inside with guns, robbing the two residents. The stolen vehicles were used primarily to facilitate other burglaries and then abandoned. Defendants also posted on Facebook for sale photos of some of the vehicles, as well as other stolen property, including the firearms. Stolen personal identification and financial devices were used to purchase items and attempts to obtain cash.

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Ewald, Gutierrez, Medina and Velasquez remain at large. Residents with any information on the location of these individuals are encouraged to contact their local law enforcement agency.

First appearances in Denver District Court for the other defendants have not yet been scheduled.

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The filing of a criminal charge is merely a formal accusation that an individual(s) committed a crime(s) under Colorado laws. A defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. See Colo. RPC 3.6