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AG Sunday, State College Police Announce Charges Against 14 People in Cocaine Trafficking Ring Involving Penn State U. Students, Fraternities

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STATE COLLEGE — Attorney General Dave Sunday, in conjunction with State College Police Department and the 54th Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, announced charges against 14 people in connection to a cocaine-trafficking [operation](#) involving primarily college students and two fraternities.

In all, 13 [defendants](#) were Penn State University students at or around the time of the alleged conduct, in 2023 and 2024. The 14th defendant, the father of a student, is charged with tampering with evidence and hindering the investigation.

According to the investigation and a grand jury presentment, two members of the organization — Agostino Abbatiello and Thomas Robinson — were the main suppliers for the group, making regular trips to Philadelphia and New York for large quantities of cocaine.

The cocaine was then cut and packaged — primarily at the Delta Upsilon and Sigma Chi fraternity houses — and distributed mainly to Penn State University students.

Abbatiello, Robinson, and two others — Mohammed Hurabi and Lars Zeepvat — are charged with felony corrupt organizations, conspiracy, dealing in proceeds of unlawful activity, and related offenses. A fifth person, Robert Zanolla, is charged with felony conspiracy and criminal use of a communication facility, and related misdemeanors.

The eight other student-aged defendants charged are facing misdemeanor counts of possession and paraphernalia.

“This was a coordinated and highly-profitable drug-trafficking crew revolving around two senior members of the fraternities, other fraternity brothers, and pledges,” Attorney General Sunday said. “In fact, according to the evidence uncovered, cutting and packaging cocaine was, for some pledges, an indoctrination into the fraternities.”

NOTE: There was a misstatement at a press event today regarding current student status; at least four charged individuals are current students.

Law enforcement used a variety of tactics to track the individuals involved, how the cocaine was obtained, packaged and sold. Most of the payments were made in cash or via payment apps.

Also charged, with misdemeanors, are: Liam Smith, Michael Brogno, Kaden Howe, Connor Hurleigh, Seth Beardsley, Kyle Ridpath, Daniel Price, and Charles Wiseman.

Paul Robinson is charged with felony tampering, hindering apprehension for taking steps to conceal evidence, including a safe containing drugs and cash, and obstructing the investigation.

The cases will be prosecuted by the Office of Attorney General Drug Strike Force Section. Criminal charges, and any discussion thereof, are merely allegations and all defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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