



PRESS RELEASE

November 09, 2004

On November 08, 2004, at about 2:30 pm, a Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Deputy assigned to the Traffic Unit stopped a red Dodge Caravan for a traffic violation on I 20/59 at the sixty-six mile marker Northbound. Assisted by an Alabama State Trooper, they asked for and obtained consent to search the vehicle and located 28 different bundles of marijuana concealed throughout the vehicle in various hidden compartments weighing in at approximately 81 pounds. The driver of the vehicle, Luis Omar Marrero – W, M, 27 years old, of 5332 Maui Lane, Orlando, Florida – is currently in the Tuscaloosa County Jail charged with Trafficking Marijuana. Bond is set at \$500,000.00. Marrero was the only occupant of the vehicle.

The Tuscaloosa County Commission gave final approval for a \$164,900.00 grant from the Department of Justice COPS Office to combat the rising methamphetamine problem in west Alabama. Funds will be used to train officers in recognition of precursor chemicals used in the production of methamphetamine, enforcement of existing laws, and prevention programs.

The grant will fund a 32 hour comprehensive basic clan-lab safety course for law enforcement and forensic personnel who are assigned to investigate, seize, and process clandestine laboratory sites. Course topics will include clandestine laboratory methods, current production trends, clan-lab toxicology, chemical/physical hazards, hazard assessment, control, use of personal protective equipment, site control, decontamination, and emergency situations. Equipment for seizing methamphetamine labs will also be purchased from this grant, which will aid the Sheriff's Office in addressing this ever-increasing national problem.