

## Sheriff's Targeted Anti-Crime Response Team

Broward **Sheriff's** Office (Broward County, Florida)

**Problem:** Illegal activities related to narcotic sales and distribution that affect the Quality of Life for the citizens of Dania Beach.

**Analysis:** The Broward Sheriffs Office developed an operational plan to help combat illegal narcotics in the City of Dania Beach. START is an acronym for (Sheriffs Targeted Anti-Crime Response Team). This initiative was developed in direct response to complaints from district residents, community leaders, and city officials about neighborhoods showing sign of urban decay due to the impact of illegal narcotics activity.

**Response:** The Broward Sheriffs Office implemented a four-phase approach to this mission:

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Phase One   | Obtaining support from community groups, law enforcement agencies, and other governmental agencies. |
| Phase Two   | Intelligence gathering and target identification.   |
| Phase Three | Enforcement   |
| Phase Four  | Maintenance   |

**Assessment:** The start operation showed exemplary results:

Phase three resulted in the arrest of sixty suspects within the targeted areas. Seizures included fourteen ounces of crack cocaine, one ounce of cocaine, sixteen pounds of cannabis, \$860.00 U.S. currency and one motor vehicle. During Phase **four** (the maintenance phase), a total of five hundred and thirty-six arrests were made. Seizures included twelve ounces of crack cocaine, approximately one ounce of powder cocaine, three pounds of cannabis, one half ounce of heroin, \$39,046.00 U.S. currency and five motor vehicles. We continue to monitor the criminal activity throughout the targeted area. Because of the positive impact that this initiative has made within the community, city residents and business owners are now working in partnership with the Broward Sheriffs Office to continue to keep their neighborhoods a safe place for their families.

## **Sheriff's Targeted Anti-Crime Response Team**

### **Scanning**

The City of Dania Beach is a diverse community of approximately 12 square miles. It has been a contract district for the Broward Sheriff's Office since October 1988. The city has a population of approximately 28,000 people. Dania Beach is bordered to the north by the Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International Airport, Port Everglades, and the City of Fort Lauderdale and to the south by the City of Hollywood. Major thoroughfares include 1-95, 1-595, US 1, Griffin Road, Stirling Road and Sheridan Street. District #2- Dania Beach, was selected as site of the first START initiative. The START initiative is a collaborative effort between the Broward Sheriff's Office, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and members of South Florida HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) dedicated to combating the sale and distribution of illegal narcotics. The areas targeted for the START initiative were the 203 and 204 zones of the city. These areas represent some of the most economically depressed and socially challenged areas within the City of Dania Beach. Historically, these communities have been plagued with high crime and high incidents of narcotic sales. A specific area of concern within Dania Beach was the C. Will Thomas (Modello) Park. Geographically, the target area was bordered by the Dania Cut-Off Canal to the north, the Florida East Coast Railroad to the east, Sheridan Street to the south and Bryan Road to the west. A municipal facility, the C. Will Thomas Park (Modello Park) consisting of a small recreation building, a playground, a baseball field, basketball courts, is located near the center of the target area, the park

serves as the nucleus of all activity within this neighborhood. The City of Dania Parks and Recreation Division staffs the park and funds activities, however, there was little in the way of organized youth sports leagues or other activities for the children and teens residing in the neighborhood. The south side of the park is bordered by NW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, which provides direct access from Federal Highway and Bryan Road, to the street drug dealers that frequent the area.

To identify the problem, the following steps were taken to analyze and address the problem:

- . Discussions with district Neighborhood Response Teams (NRT)
- Analysis work-up from BSO Powertrac Crime Intelligence Group
- Surveillance by BSO Street Crimes Unit and District 2 NRT Detectives
- Discussions with **BSO** Regional Narcotics Detectives
- Crime Stopper's Tips
- Criminal Debriefings
- Crime Prevention thru Environment Design (CPTED) surveys

Common problems associated with street level narcotics were anticipated. These included a higher than normal level of traffic (vehicular and pedestrian) in residential areas, street level prostitutes, and an increase in part one crimes in the areas in and around the target area.

### **Analysis**

In response to these community concerns, a comprehensive operations plan was prepared, coordinated and implemented to:

1. To reduce narcotics complaints in the target areas by eliminating the various levels of drug dealers and drug distribution locations.
2. To provide resources to the community to enhance the quality of life in the targeted area.
3. To foster a partnership with the community to ensure success.

To successfully accomplish this mission, the Broward Sheriffs Office staff worked in partnership with community leaders, residents, and city administrators, as well as, other local, state, and federal agencies. This START initiative took approximately four months and was broken down into four operational phases.

- **Phase One** started prior to the consolidated deployment of BSO resources. It involved obtaining the cooperation and support of the community, other law enforcement agencies, community groups and other governmental agencies.
- **Phase Two** ran concurrently with Phase One and involved initiating covert investigative tactics to identify the key violators involved in narcotics activities in the targeted area. This stage encompassed the intelligence gathering process coupled with covert enforcement operations. During this phase, detectives located and identified specific targets, identified structures where illegal narcotics were being sold and identified the perpetrators. The detectives then utilized a variety of investigative methods to develop probable cause for the issuance of search and arrest warrants. Analysts surveyed and mapped activity in the target area. A

"Top Ten" list was prepared that identified the worst narcotic violators and the most problematic locations. During this phase, mid-level and upper-level investigations into narcotic distributors were conducted.

- **Phase Three** was the enforcement phase. During this enforcement phase, detectives served arrest and search warrants. Detectives attempted to establish probable cause for the "Top Ten" subjects and locations. Detectives conducted numerous operations to ensure the most efficient and effective utilization of enforcement resources to eliminate narcotics distribution from the community. A zero tolerance attitude was adopted throughout this phase.
- **Phase Four** was the maintenance phase and was administered from the District Command. The overall success of this mission was dependent on this important phase. An advisory group composed of residents and key community leaders was formed. This group was kept apprised of the progress during the entire operation. All resources possible were utilized to ensure the success of this phase and overall success of the mission. Any community deterioration was met with swift effective action to ensure that the neighborhood remained crime free.

## **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

1. Develop intelligence concerning drug trafficking networks, which distribute narcotics in the targeted area, as well as surrounding areas. Refer this intelligence to the appropriate law enforcement group for follow-up action.

2. Identify drug traffickers, drug sellers, drug users, and violent offenders targeting them for enforcement action, arrest and prosecution.
3. Eliminate the open market appearance and visible drug sales occurring in the target area.
4. Identify and target career criminals for prosecution and enhanced penalties.
5. Identify and seize assets belonging to narcotics traffickers and their organizations.
6. Identify subjects with active warrants, specifically, active narcotic warrants.
7. Reduce the number of "crack houses" offering retail level illicit drug sales through sustained enforcement and nuisance abatement.
8. Reduce violent crimes in proximity to the target area.
9. Implement a public awareness campaign:
  - A. Inform the public of the START enforcement efforts and develop community support.
  - B. Inform the public of how they can contribute information to help target and sustain this enforcement action.
  - C. Promote the use of the Crime Stoppers Program to identify narcotics dealers.  
  
Promote the development of homeowner/tenant associations and Neighborhood Watch organizations.
10. Maximize the referral of appropriate offenders to treatment programs that offer supervision and feedback regarding recovery progress.

## **Response**

This initiative commenced on September 18, 2000, with the maintenance phase beginning on November 17, 2000. The cycle of this initiative took approximately four months and was broken into four operational phases with phase four being a maintenance phase.

### **Phase One: September 18, 2000**

This phase started prior to the consolidated deployment of BSO resources. It involved obtaining the cooperation and support of the community, other law enforcement agencies, BSO Department of Corrections and Community Control and the Juvenile Intervention Facility (JIF).

1. BSO personnel met with neighborhood and community groups, religious organizations and the criminal justice agencies involved in this initiative to discuss goals, objectives and coordination.
2. The Crime Stoppers program was promoted to neighborhood and community groups as a method of obtaining the community's assistance in identifying drug dealers. These groups also served as a corner stone for continued community involvement and ownership. Citizens were queried for their views on neighborhood enforcement priorities.
3. Personnel conducted a pre-enforcement assessments of their respective problem locations and crime rates using empirical crime incident data, citizen opinions, and police staff input. This

assessment served as part of the pre-enforcement evaluation component of the overall plan.

4. Analytical staff prepared a prioritized list of problematic locations recommended for the enforcement program. This list was provided to the operational personnel for enforcement action. Analytical staff maintained a computer database of all the individuals arrested within the area. This database contains all pertinent data of the individual, his/her associates, and disposition of the charges.
5. Operational personnel met with representatives from all law enforcement agencies operating in and around the target location, including the Department of Detention and Community Control, to share intelligence data, and to coordinate simultaneous enforcement operations, and to select locations needing joint enforcement efforts.
6. An environmental assessment of the targeted areas was completed using CPTED strategies. Areas where the physical environment facilitated narcotics activity, were identified and targeted.
7. Members of the START team met with representatives of the City of Dania Beach, the Broward County State Attorney's Office, the United States Attorney Office, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Juvenile Intake Facility (JIF) to discuss the program goals and objectives and to obtain support and mutual cooperation.

The Broward Sheriffs Office relied heavily upon existing relationships with other agencies and community organizations to expedite this process. Personnel assigned to accomplish the objectives continued to work this process throughout the entire operation to ensure the continued support of all involved.

**Phase Two: September 18, 2000 (Ran Concurrently with Phase One)**

This phase involved implementing covert investigative tactics to identify the key individuals involved in narcotics activities within the targeted area. During this phase detectives located and identified specific targets, identified structures where illegal drugs were being sold, and identified the perpetrators. The detectives then utilized a variety of tactics to develop probable cause for the issuance of search and arrest warrants. Activity in the targeted areas was monitored and a "Top Ten" list was prepared. This list identified the worst narcotic violators and the most problematic locations. During this phase SID (Strategic Investigations Division) personnel were assigned to initiate mid-level and high-level investigations into narcotic distribution.

The following methods were implemented during the covert enforcement stage:

- Videotaped "Showtime" Narcotics Buys
- Controlled Buys for Search Warrants
- Surveillance Operations
- Trash Pulls
- Prostitution Sweeps/Debriefings
- Identify areas for CPTED initiatives

### **Phase Three: October 9, 2000**

Phase three of this operation was considered the enforcement phase. During this phase, detectives served numerous arrest and search warrants. Detectives worked diligently to establish probable **cause for the** "Top Ten" subjects/locations. Detectives conducted various operations, as listed below; to ensure the most efficient and effective enforcement initiative was conducted to eradicate narcotics distributors from the targeted community. A zero tolerance attitude was strictly adhered to throughout this phase.

The following methods were used to accomplish this phase:

- Sweeps
- Buy Bust Operations
- Reverse String Operations
- Executions of Search Warrants
- Traffic Enforcement/Drivers License Checkpoints
- Warrant Sweep in Target Area
- Code Enforcement Inspections
- Community Clean-ups
- Prisoner Work Crews used for Clean-ups.

### **Phase Four: November 17, 2000**

Phase four of this operation was considered the maintenance phase and continues within the District. The overall success of this mission is dependent on this important phase. An advisory group was created that included community leaders, religious leaders, BSO deputies, and city officials. The purpose of the

group was to monitor the progress of this initiative. To guarantee the success of this mission and to ensure that all possible resources were utilized efficiently. Any noted deterioration within the community resulted in quick effective corrective action to ensure the continued success of this initiative.

### **Assessment**

In 2000, the results of the START initiative proved successful. During phase three, a total of **sixty arrests** were made in the targeted areas. The majority of these arrests involved individuals targeted at the inception of this initiative. Seizures included fourteen ounces of crack cocaine, one ounce of powder cocaine, sixteen pounds of cannabis, \$860.00 U.S. currency and one motor vehicle. Due to the success of START in District #2- Dania Beach, the Broward Sheriff's Office implemented the START initiative in other BSO districts (Pompano Beach, Central Broward Unincorporated Fort Lauderdale, and Deerfield Beach) within Broward County. The START initiative continued throughout 2001, with tremendous results. This continued effort has resulted in the following: a total of five hundred and thirty-six (536) arrests have been made. Seizures included twelve ounces of crack cocaine, approximately one ounce of cocaine, three pounds of cannabis, one half ounce of heroin, \$39,046.00 U.S. currency, and five motor vehicles.

## **Operational Instructions:**

- ❖ Aviation provided aerial support during the operation.
- 4: Detectives from the District #2- Dania Beach as well as detectives from the B.S.O. Robbery Unit and Regional Narcotics Section were used to interview all suspects.
- ❖ The Fugitive Squad conducted a warrants sweep.
- ❖ Gang Investigations Unit assisted in the operation. Detectives provide intelligence for known gang (members) in the targeted area.
- ❖ Narcotic detection canines were utilized throughout this operation.
- The district's Neighborhood Response Teams (NRT) ensured that community and neighborhood associations were provided with the most accurate and reliable information possible about his initiative.
- ❖ Supervisors from the BSO Strategic Investigations Division coordinated their efforts with district supervisors to foster a cooperative working relationship.
- The BSO Special Weapons and Tactics team executed numerous high-risk search warrants during the operation.
- ❖ A municipal code enforcement team was utilized to "clean up" the area. City of Dania Beach Code Enforcement officers accompanied deputies during the execution of search warrants and inspected properties to ensure compliance with appropriate city codes and ordinances.
- ❖ Traffic Units provided Motor Deputies for traffic enforcement operations.

### **Other Special Notations:**

- + Upon identifying target locations, operational plans were prepared. These plans included all logistical needs and planned enforcement activity. The results of each were closely monitored for effectiveness.
- ❖ A detailed work-up was completed on each suspect identified as a perpetrator.
- ❖ Detectives contacted the appropriate federal agency for assistance with those violators meeting the criteria for federal prosecution.
- ❖ Overtime needs were monitored and addressed by SID.

### **Resources Utilized:**

The following is a list of federal, state and local entities as well as BSO components that assisted with the START initiative:

- ❖ BSO District #2- Dania Beach Neighborhood Response Teams
- ❖ BSO District #2- Dania Beach Criminal Investigations Unit
- ❖ BSO Strategic Investigations Division, Regional Narcotics Unit
- ❖ BSO Strategic Investigations Division, Street Crimes Unit
- . BSO Strategic Investigations Division, Strategic Intelligence Unit
- ❖ BSO Countywide Operations Division
- ❖ BSO Technical Support Unit
- ❖ BSO Special Weapons and Tactics Unit
- ❖ BSO Career Criminal Unit
- ❖ BSO Traffic Enforcement Units
- ❖ BSO Robbery Unit

- ❖ BSO Narcotic K-9 (Regional Narcotics)
- ❖ **BSO** Gang Unit
- ❖ BSO Department of Detention and Community Control
- ❖ Broward County Multi-Agency Gang Task Force
- ❖ US Drug Enforcement Administration
- Other State and Federal Agencies (FDLE, HIDTA, INS, etc)
- ❖ Dania Beach Code Enforcement Team
- ❖ Dania Beach Parks and Recreation Staff
- ❖ Citizens representing various businesses and religious organizations located within the target area
- ❖ Homeowners and tenants residing within the targeted area
- ❖ City of Dania Beach Officials including the Mayor, commissioners and City Manager
- ❖ Local Confidential Informants

### **Benefits to the Community**

Although the District #2- Dania Beach START initiative was implemented in just two of the district's zones, the community responded enthusiastically to the changes being made within their city and their respective neighborhoods. When local media announced that sixty drug dealers had been arrested, during the first initiative, those residents who were previously uncertain that positive changes could be made, had a change of heart and actively participated in other community activities to help contribute toward improving their neighborhoods. Additionally, through the enforcement efforts of START, an apartment building,

across from C. Will Thomas (Modella) Park, was cited and deemed a drug haven for dealers and users. With the assistance of the City of Dania Beach Nuisance Abatement Board, the City of Dania Beach condemned the property and later purchased it. This property is currently being renovated and will be used as a BSO substation/ community center. Once complete, all road patrol operations will be housed out of this facility. This facility will ensure a continued law enforcement presence in the area at all times of the day and night. This area, which was at one time saturated with drug dealers and buyers, will be saturated with police activity, due to the occupation of the new substation. The community meeting room will provide a safe environment for neighborhood and community organizations to gather to discuss issues of importance. As a result of this initiative, we learned the importance of continued community education on issues affecting our communities. The district command staff continues to monitor daily criminal activity within these neighborhoods. Staff members share this information with neighborhood associations, businesses, community leaders, and municipal officials to ensure the continued success of this initiative. Additionally, district staff members continue to work with municipal officials and businesses to implement appropriate CPTED measures. Throughout this process the areas of concern were monitored daily and any problems that arose were addressed immediately. Any upward trend in criminal activity is met with an aggressive timely response, both by district resources and by the resources of the other entities involved in this partnership. The START initiative, which began in Dania Beach, was so successful that over the past two years, it has been implemented

in three other BSO districts (District XI-Pompano Beach, District V-Central Broward and District X-Deerfield Beach.) The results are listed below:

**DISTRICT II/Dania Beach (as of December 2001)**

PHASE III ARRESTS		PHASE IV ARRESTS	
Felony Drug	39	Felony Drug	191
Other Felony	4	Other Felony	13
Misd. Drug	2	Misd. Drug	56
Other Misd.	1	Other Misd.	174
Traffic	0	Traffic	15
Warrant	14	Warrant	87
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>536</b>

**DISTRICT II/Dania Beach (as of December 2001)**

PHASE III SEIZU		PHASE IV SEIZU	
Crack Cocaine	1 ounce	Crack Cocaine	.95 ounce
Cocaine Powder	14 ounces	Cocaine Powder	12 ounces
Cannabis	16 pounds	Cannabis	3 pounds
Heroin	0	Heroin	.50 ounce
U.S. Currency	\$860.00	U.S. Currency	\$39,046.00
Firearms	0	Firearms	0
Vehicles	1	Vehicles	5

**DISTRICT XI/Pompano Beach (January 2001-June 2001)**

PHASE III ARRE		PHASE IV ARRE	
Felony Drug	127	Felony Drug	163
Other Felony	7	Other Felony	11
Misd. Drug	33	Misd. Drug	48
Other Misd.	25	Other Misd.	190
Traffic	4	Traffic	3
Warrant	35	Warrant	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>432</b>

**DISTRICT XI/Pompano Beach (January 2001-June 2001)**

PHASE III SEIZL		PHASE IV SEIZU	
Crack Cocaine	2.37 pounds	Crack Cocaine	.39 pounds
Cocaine Powder	8.24 pounds	Cocaine Powder	.30 pounds
Cannabis	8 pounds	Cannabis	2 pounds
Heroin	0	Heroin	0
U.S. Currency	\$13,471.00	U.S. Currency	\$9,964.00
Firearms	6	Firearms	0
Vehicles	8	Vehicles	6

**DISTRICT V/Central Broward (June 2001-November 2001)**

PHASE III ARRESTS		PHASE IV ARRESTS	
Felony Drug	153	Felony Drug	16
Other Felony	15	Other Felony	0
Misd. Drug	55	Misd. Drug	2
Other Misd.	38	Other Misd.	0
Traffic	4	Traffic	0
Warrant	26	Warrant	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>

**DISTRICT VICentral Broward (June 2001-November 2001)**

PHASE III SEIZU		PHASE IV SEIZU	
Crack Cocaine	1.5 pounds	Crack Cocaine	19.5 grams
Cocaine Powder	77.76 pounds	Cocaine Powder	6 grams
Cannabis	156.4625 lbs.	Cannabis	5 grams
Heroin	149 grams	Heroin	3 grams
U.S. Currency	\$13,843.00	U.S. Currency	\$52.00
Firearms	4	Firearms	0
Vehicles	7	Vehicles	0

## **DISTRICT X (Deerfield Beach)**

START was implemented in District X (Deerfield Beach) on December 10, 2001 and is currently operational. No statistics are available at this time, but an early assessment of the Deerfield Beach initiative is positive. In conclusion, this process has helped build a strong partnership between the community and Broward Sheriff's Office. But more importantly this initiative has helped District #2 - Dania Beach reduce crime within the community. **In 2001, the City of Dania Beach's overall crime rate was reduced by 24.7% and the overall clearance rates saw an increase to 46%.** These reductions are directly associated with the START initiative and credit goes to those who created it and participated in it.

### **Reference List:**

City of Dania Beach Zoning

Powertrac Crime Intelligence Group (PCIG)

Strategic Investigations Division

Uniform Crime Report

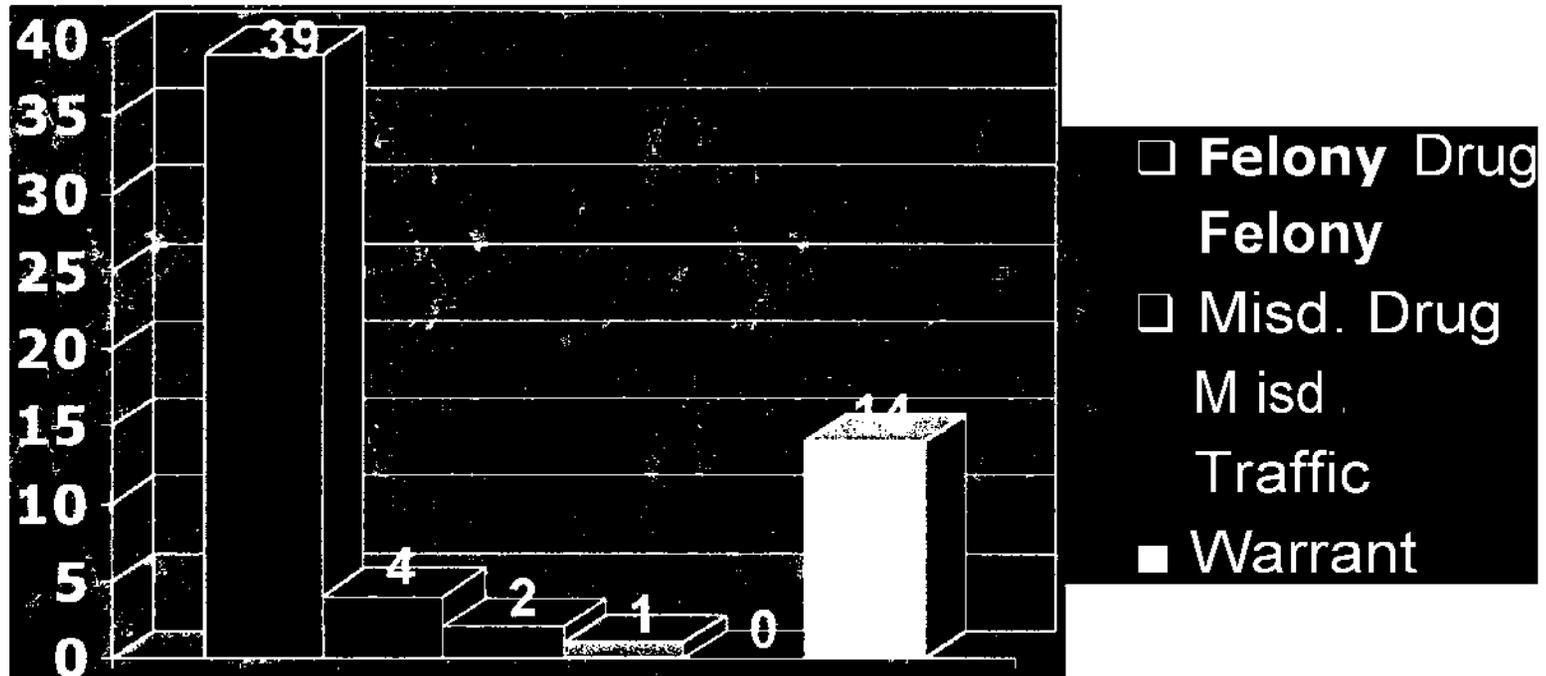
### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information about the START initiative in the Broward Sheriff's Office, contact Lieutenant James Fonda, District 2/Dania Beach, 2601 W. Broward Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 33310; phone (954) 926-2400, fax (954) 926-2404, E-mail at [James.Fondo@Sheriff.Orf](mailto:James.Fondo@Sheriff.Orf).

***Special Thanks To:*** Captain John Brooks, Lieutenant Brad Ostroff, Sergeant Jose Pico, Sergeant Dan Christophers, Sergeant Carmine Testa, Sergeant Alvin Pollock, and CSA Lesley Washecka

# Broward Sheriff's Office District 2/Dania Beach

## Phase II Arrests



# Errov.: rd Sheriff's Office District 2/Dania Beach

## Phase IV Arrests

