



Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office

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News Release

Sheriff's Office Participates in Statewide Shoulder Tap and Minor Decoy Operations

Santa Barbara - As part of a statewide effort to combat underage drinking, the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office conducted "Shoulder Tap" and "Minor Decoy" operations on Friday, November 4 and Saturday, November 5, 2016. During the two-day operation, underage minor decoys, working under the direct supervision of Sheriff's deputies and an Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) agent, visited 14 locations throughout Isla Vista and the City of Goleta.

During the shoulder tap operations, minor decoys stood outside convenience stores and liquor stores where they asked patrons to buy them alcohol. The minors made it clear that they were underage and could not purchase the alcohol by themselves. Over the two-day operation, five of the adults that were approached agreed to purchase alcohol for the minors. They were each cited for furnishing alcohol to a minor.

The decoy operations involved the minors entering businesses where they made an attempt to purchase alcohol from the clerks. Three of the businesses that were visited ultimately sold alcohol to the minor decoys. Each of the clerks were cited for furnishing alcohol to a minor. Additionally, these businesses will be subject to further ABC administrative measures.

Sheriff's deputies also conducted inspections at five businesses in Isla Vista. The purpose of the inspections was to ensure that these establishments were complying with the terms and conditions of their liquor licenses. One of these businesses was issued a misdemeanor citation for being in possession of liquor that was prohibited by the terms of their license.

According to the American Medical Association, underage drinking can increase chances of risky sexual behavior and teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, compromise health and result in unintentional injury and death. According to California Highway Patrol traffic statistics, in 2013, 136 people 20 years of age or younger were killed in alcohol related collisions.

The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office uses grant funding from ABC to battle alcohol-related crime in the Isla Vista and Goleta areas which tend to have a higher percentage of these types of incidents. In addition to conducting operations such as this one, the grant funding is also utilized to educate both on-sale and off-sale establishments with the importance of operating within the restrictions of their ABC licenses.

The ABC's Grant Assistance Program (GAP) was established in 1995 and during that time has distributed more than 20 million dollars to law enforcement in California to combat alcohol-related crime.

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