



**SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Incident**

**DATE/TIME:** Friday, February 19, 2016

**LOCATION:** City of Santa Cruz

**TOPIC:** Drug Sales Arrests

**CASE NUMBER:** 16S-01480, 16S-01485

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**INFORMATION:**

Four arrested during joint narcotics sting operation.

Friday February 19th, between 1:30pm and 3:15pm, the Santa Cruz Police Neighborhood Enforcement Team and Santa Cruz County Anti-Crime Team conducted a narcotics sting operation in the City of Santa Cruz. The joint operation resulted in the arrest of four suspects for conspiracy and sales of narcotics to undercover officers. The suspects sold methamphetamine and heroin to undercover officers. The arrests were made in the areas of San Lorenzo Park and the east river levee of the San Lorenzo River near Riverside Ave.

The Santa Cruz Police Neighborhood Enforcement Team (NET) is specialized unit. NET works as a team to focus on mid to long-term issues works focus is on enforcement strategies in order to suppress crimes of violence, gangs and drugs throughout the City of Santa Cruz.

Suspect photos on the following page.

The suspects were booked into Santa Cruz County Jail. The suspects arrested have been identified as:

**Case 16S-01480**

Rafael Saldana - 46 years old, Transient, Santa Cruz

Arrested for (1) Sales of Heroin 11351H&S, (2) Conspiracy to Commit Crime 182 PC

Juan Gonzalez, - 41 years old, Transient, Santa Cruz

Arrested for (1) Sales of Heroin 11351H&S, (2) Conspiracy to Commit Crime 182 PC

**Case 16S-01485**

Benjamin Kirkley - 59 years old, Transient, Santa Cruz

Arrested for (1) Sales of Methamphetamine 11378H&S, (2) Conspiracy to Commit Crime 182PC

John Pitts - 37 years old, Transient, Santa Cruz

Arrested for (1) Sales of Methamphetamine 11378H&S, (2) Conspiracy to Commit Crime 182PC

This successful drug arrest is due to the combined work of the Santa Cruz Police Neighborhood Enforcement Team and the Santa Cruz County Anti-Crime Team.

**For additional information, contact: Joyce Blaschke**

**Phone: (831) 420-5844**

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Anonymous tips can also be sent to the police department through our Tip Line (831) 420-5995, or from our Website; [www.santacruzpolice.com](http://www.santacruzpolice.com). Tipsters can also submit an anonymous tip via our smartphone app or from an SMS text. Visit our Website for instructions.

**Photo of Rafael Saldana - 46 years old, Transient, Santa Cruz**

Arrested for (1) Sales of Heroin 11351H&S, (2) Conspiracy to Commit Crime 182 PC



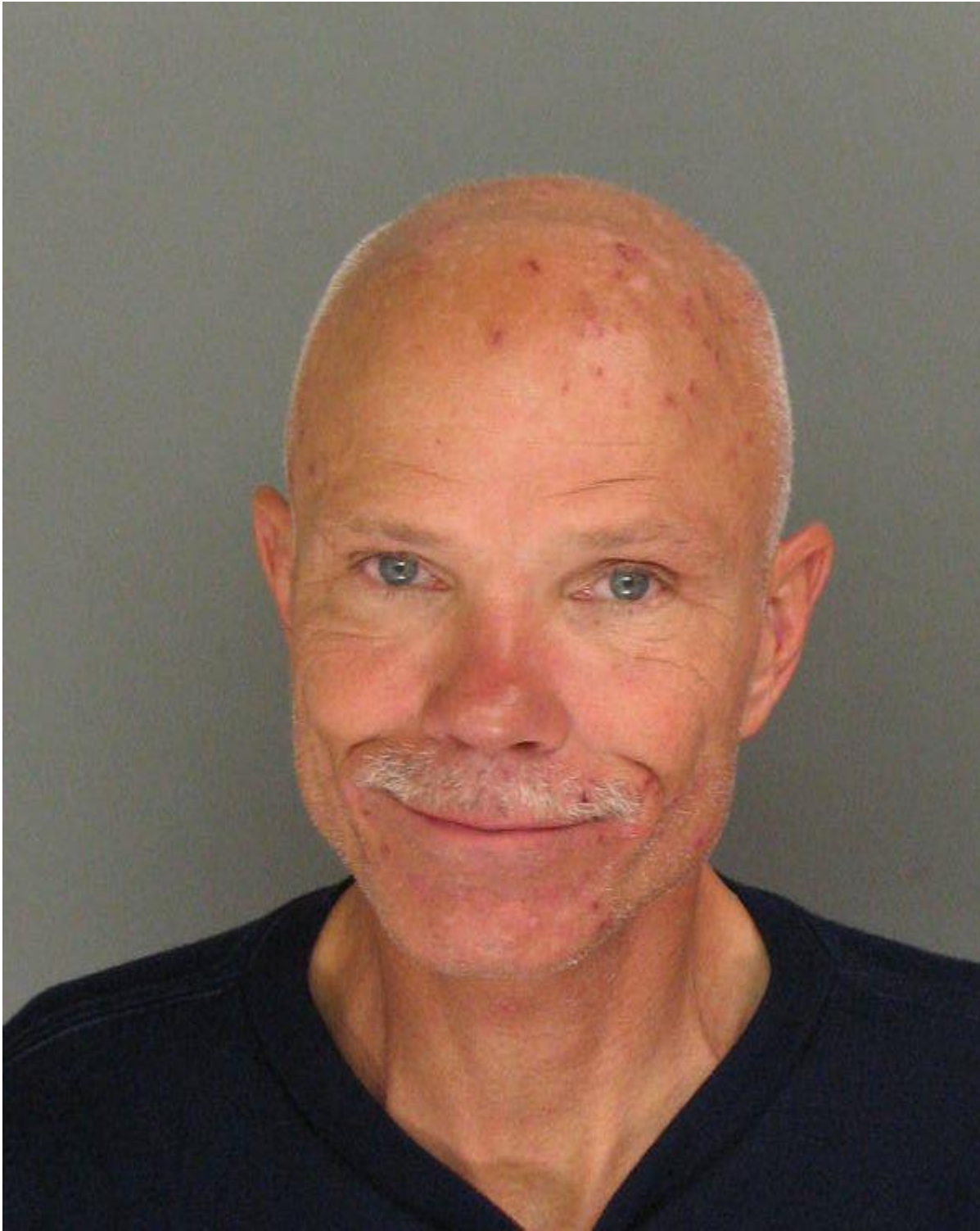
**Photo of Juan Gonzalez, - 41 years old, Transient, Santa Cruz**

Arrested for (1) Sales of Heroin 11351H&S, (2) Conspiracy to Commit Crime 182 PC



**Photo of Benjamin Kirkley - 59 years old, Transient, Santa Cruz**

Arrested for (1) Sales of Methamphetamine 11378H&S, (2) Conspiracy to Commit Crime 182PC



**Photo of John Pitts - 37 years old, Transient, Santa Cruz**

Arrested for (1) Sales of Methamphetamine 11378H&S, (2) Conspiracy to Commit Crime 182PC

