



SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT

155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060



MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: February 27, 2024

LOCATION: 800 Block of Center St

TOPIC: Vandalism Arrest

CASE NUMBER: 23S-04315

INVOLVED SUBJECTS:

Suspect:

Name: Taj Blum

Age: 49

Arrested: Yes

Charges: Felony Vandalism

Victim: City of Santa Cruz

INFORMATION

On the evening of July 29, 2023, The Santa Cruz Police Department received a report of vandalism to the "Black Lives Matter" mural painting at 800 Center St. Responding officers located the damaged mural, which consisted of blue paint splattered across the mural.

SCPD Investigators were called in to begin immediate follow-up work to identify the suspect(s). Detectives obtained video of the crime, in which a suspect is seen committing the vandalism to the mural. With this video evidence and assistance from the community, Investigators identified a possible vehicle and person of interest.

Investigators continued to work the case by serving multiple search warrants, interviewing witnesses, and conducting forensic examinations and were able to obtain enough evidence to arrest Taj Blum for the felony vandalism to the mural. Blum was taken into custody without incident on Tuesday, February 27, 2024.

Investigators worked with the District Attorney's Office to investigate the motive in this case, and at this time, no evidence supports this being a hate crime.

For additional information, contact: Deputy Chief Jon Bush

Phone: (831) 420-5874

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