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Indiana News

Police: IMPD Officer Helped Wife Run Prostitution Ring

IMPD Officer, Sheriff's Employee, Woman Arrested

POSTED: 3:36 pm EDT July 2, 2008
 UPDATED: 9:32 am EDT July 3, 2008



GREENWOOD, Ind. -- An Indianapolis Metro police officer is accused of helping his wife operate an escort business out of her Greenwood home.

The officer, his wife and a former Marion County Sheriff's Department employee were charged Wednesday in the prostitution ring.

[Images](#)

Johnson County Prosecutor Lance Hamner said that arrest warrants had been issued for Lori Vernon-Lee, 36, Jeremy Lee, 30, and Jerry L. McCory, 56.

Police said Vernon-Lee recruited women to be escorts and work out of her home.

Officers said she was generally paid about half of the money the escorts collected when they performed various sex acts.

According to a probable cause affidavit, Vernon-Lee's husband, Jeremy Lee, took money from the escorts while wearing his IMPD uniform.

Another probable cause affidavit alleged that McCory, who was a civilian MCSD employee, paid one of the escorts to perform a sex act on him.

Hamner said escort services were advertised in Nuvo magazine. IMPD began an undercover investigation about two months ago, 6News' Ericka Flye reported.

Acting on a tip that the ad was tied to a prostitution ring, investigators conducted a sting.

"Apparently they used an undercover officer to call up that number and say he wanted to have a girl and they would make arrangements, and that's what they did," Hamner said.

Vernon-Lee was charged with five Class C felony counts of promotion prostitution. Jeremy Lee faces one count of aiding in or promoting prostitution and McCory faces one count of patronizing a prostitute.

McCory resigned from his position with the MCSD and Jeremy Lee was called in Massachusetts, where he was serving in the military, and was told he had been fired from IMPD, 6News' Jack Rinehart reported.

"It's pretty shocking. Every profession has its bad eggs, but when you see something ... that involves moral turpitude of this nature, you just think that there's a certain amount of respect that somebody would have for the uniform even if they don't want to be a part of it," Hamner said.

IMPD Chief Michael Spears weighed in on the case late Wednesday to express disappointment that another police officer has been implicated in

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express disappointment that another police officer has been implicated or charged in an ongoing investigation. Within the last two weeks, four other IMPD officers were indicted on drug or gun-related charges.

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"It's very difficult for me to use the term officer with this man's name, because once he started this type of activity, he clearly separated himself from any role within this police department," Spears said. "We're disgusted by his conduct. We're ashamed of him, and I think the thing that the public needs to know is that this investigation started by the work of members of our own agency."

Prosecutors said more charges are expected in the prostitution case. Vernon-Lee turned herself in to authorities Wednesday night.

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