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Crime Stoppers USA Announces US Marshall Partnership

Indianapolis, IN – January 12th, 2009 Officials throughout the United States have proclaimed January “Crime Stoppers Month” recognizing the important contributions local Crime Stoppers programs are making to their communities. Since 1976, local Crime Stoppers programs have successfully aided law enforcement in the apprehension of 478,000 felons and the recovery of over \$4 billion in stolen property, money, and illegal drugs. Thousands of volunteer board members and supporters have helped raise the millions of dollars needed to support the community based not-for-profit programs including the payout of nearly \$72 million in rewards to anonymous tipsters. Countless lives have been impacted, an untold number of police man hours have been reduced, and we will never know how many lives have been saved through Crime Stopper’s efforts to make our communities safer.

“We all have to share the responsibility of combating crime in our neighborhoods” says Tom Kern, Crime Stoppers USA Chairman. “Understandably, many people fear the criminals who are out there victimizing people every day. That is why Crime Stoppers is such a great tool for the community to use to fight crime. Anyone of the many people who see or know a criminal could be the one calling and giving the anonymous information that leads to their arrest. Crime Stoppers cannot tell anyone who the tipster is because they don’t know. Everyone wins – except the criminals.”

Crime Stoppers USA, recognized by Crime Stoppers International as the national representative of Crime Stoppers programs throughout the United States, and the United States Marshals Service are unveiling a new partnership in 2009. The goal is to forge closer relationships between local Crime Stoppers programs and United States Marshals operating in district offices throughout the country.

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John Clark, Director of the United States Marshals Service recently wrote; "The United States Marshals Service and the local programs of Crime Stoppers USA share a common goal. We are committed to identifying, locating, and stopping the criminals that prey on our society. These individuals are responsible for diminishing the quality of life across our great country. Sadly, at a time when our neighborhoods need everyone to come forward and get involved, we are seeing messages discouraging our young citizens from giving the valuable information that may deter serious crimes and even save innocent lives. In celebration of Crime Stoppers Month, I am pleased to announce that I am committed to building stronger partnerships between the United States Marshals Service and the local programs of Crime Stoppers USA."

About Crime Stoppers

Crime Stoppers programs are 501(c)3 not-for-profit organizations, run by citizens to aid in the fight against crime. Each local Crime Stoppers program is a partnership between the community, the media, and law enforcement, and enables citizens to safely and anonymously provide information about crime and criminals in their community.

Local Crime Stoppers programs offer cash rewards of up to \$1000 to anyone furnishing anonymous information that leads to felony arrests in their community. Information concerning crime and criminals are routinely received by Crime Stoppers programs via anonymous telephone tip lines, secure web based tip forms, and most recently anonymous text messaging. Callers are never asked their names and Crime Stoppers does not use caller ID or any type of call tracking devices. Crime Stoppers forwards the information provided to appropriate local, state, and federal law enforcement for investigation and if a felony arrest is made the caller may be eligible for a cash reward. The funds used for the rewards are raised through donations from businesses and citizens to local programs. Tax dollars are not used to pay rewards.

Crime Stoppers History

The Crime Stoppers concept started in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1976. College student Michael Carmen was shot and murdered during a robbery, in a well-traveled, well-lit area of town on a busy Friday night. Weeks of investigation turned up no clues, and no one who saw the incident offered information or assistance.

Greg MacAleese, who worked for a newspaper before joining the Albuquerque Police Department, knew something innovative would be necessary to encourage the



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public to get involved and help solve the murder. He conceived the idea of producing a video re-enactment of the homicide, guaranteeing anonymity for anyone who was willing to call him with information and put up a reward from his own pocket to encourage someone to provide a lead that would help identify those responsible for the murder of Carmen.

MacAleese's plan to identify those responsible for killing Carmen worked. Within a few hours after the reenactment was broadcast on television station KOAT, he received a phone call. The story had triggered the memory of a person who heard a loud bang in the vicinity of the gas station and then saw a car driving off. The caller told MacAleese the vehicle belonged to a resident in a nearby apartment complex.

Through investigation MacAleese and a team of detectives arrested two men within 72 hours and charged them with the murder of Carmen and a string of armed robberies. MacAleese received other calls following the reenactment, including one that allowed police to solve the rape of a young woman. Realizing that this type of program might be useful in fighting crime, MacAleese convinced the Albuquerque Police Department to allow a group of citizens to establish the first Crime Stoppers program.

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For interviews with Tom Kern, Crime Stoppers USA Chairman and Director John Clark, US Marshals Service contact Tami Lawlor at 561-414-4992 or tamilawlor@live.com