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ABC Investigation Reveals Connection to National Fake ID Ring

Local Suspect Arrested and Charged

FRANKFORT, Ky. (May 26, 2011) – Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Investigator Steve Newell, along with University of Kentucky Police Detective Jason Beetz, Tuesday arrested 21 year-old Eric Gaines for distributing fake identifications as well as possession of illegal drugs. Gaines is connected to a national fake ID ring headquartered in Florida.

Upon arrest, Gaines was charged with seven counts of criminal possession of a forged instrument, second degree; trafficking in a controlled substance (ecstasy), possession of a controlled substance (heroin), possession of marijuana, and possession of drug paraphernalia. Gaines was booked in the Fayette County Detention Center with possible federal charges pending. Bond was set at \$55,025.

The lengthy investigation began when a UK student was arrested by UK police with fake identification in his possession. Investigator Newell was then brought in to assist. Further inquiry revealed that the ID was acquired from a fake ID operation. Once targeted suspects were identified, ABC investigative aides made purchases of the fraudulent identifications allowing search warrants to be issued for Gaines' email account.

The search revealed that Gaines was involved in a national fake ID ring and was directly responsible for facilitating and distributing approximately 154 fake

operators' licenses in Fayette County, many being sold to area high school students.

In connection with the local arrest, federal investigators in the Miami Beach, Florida area arrested the source of the fake ID ring and charged him with multiple federal violations including numerous counts of fraud-related charges.

University of Kentucky Police, U.S. Postal Service inspectors, and the U.S. Secret Service also contributed to the investigation.

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