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OPERATION INVICTUS CIVITAS, UNDEFEATABLE COMMUNITY, NETS 100th ARREST

Yakima, Wash. – The U.S. Marshals Service Pacific Northwest Violent Offender Task Force (PNVOTF) announced today that Operation Invictus Civitas, *Undefeatable Community*, made their 100th arrest since launching the operation on June 3, 2019. According to Chief Ed Levesque of the Yakima County Sheriff's Office, "the efforts of our law enforcement partnership are truly paying off, making Yakima County a safer place to live for all of our residents and visitors. Congratulations on the 100th arrest during Operation Invictus!"

While the PNVOTF is not providing the suspect's name at this time, the suspect became a priority target for the PNVOTF after being stopped by the Yakima Police Department Gang Unit in June of this year and found to be in possession of an AR-15 rifle. Subsequent investigation by the Yakima Police Department determined that the suspect was prohibited from possessing a firearm due to a prior felony conviction. The suspect was subsequently charged with Unlawful Possession of a Firearm. The suspect has a long criminal history that includes 7 prior arrests and 3 felony convictions. The PNVOTF arrested the suspect in the lower Yakima Valley area.

Operation Invictus is a joint United States Marshals Service, Operation Triple Beam, Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) and Pacific Northwest Violent Offender Task Force initiative geared toward reducing violent crime in the Yakima region. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a national initiative that brings together federal, state, local and tribal law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and community leaders to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in a community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. Yakima County, and specifically the City of Yakima, was selected as a PSN area of focus in 2018 due to its high rates of gang and gun-related violent crimes. The U.S. Marshals Service designed Operation Invictus to initiate a community-based, comprehensive, multi-component strategy being implemented over a two-year period.

According to Chief Matt Murray, Yakima Police Department, "I have set the primary objective for the Yakima Police Department as the reduction of violent crime. The partnership with our Federal partners through Project Safe Neighborhoods, and specifically the county wide collaborative efforts of Operation Invictus Civitas are helping us achieve this objective. I am proud of the role YPD has played in making the 100 arrest - and can thus assure the people of Yakima that we are both strategically and properly focused. This effort has far exceeded my expectations and the credit goes to the men and women doing this difficult work to keep our community safe."

U.S. Marshal Craig Thayer for the Eastern District of Washington thanked everyone involved for helping to make this operation a huge success. "Operation Invictus is great example of the cooperative efforts that exist between our Federal, State and Local Law Enforcement partners. As a direct result of this operation, 100 dangerous criminals have been taken off the street up to this point in the ongoing operation." USM Thayer continued, by thanking the men and women who are working hard on a daily basis "to help ensure justice for our communities."



The PNVOTF is a U.S. Marshals Service sponsored partnership composed of federal, state and local law enforcement officers from Washington, Oregon and Alaska. The primary mission of the PNVOTF is to locate, arrest, and return to the justice system the most violent, most egregious federal and state fugitives. Operation Invictus partners include the United States Marshals Service, United States Attorney's Office, Federal Bureau of Investigations, Drug Enforcement Administration, Yakima County Sheriff's Office, Washington State Department of Corrections, Yakima Police Department, Union Gap Police Department, Benton County Sheriff's Office, Kennewick Police Department, Yakama Nation Department of Public Safety, LEAD Task Force, Yakima County Prosecutors Office, and Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives.

Additional information about the U.S. Marshals Service can be found at <http://www.usmarshals.gov>.

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