

U.S. Border Patrol in Buffalo Arrest Two Wanted Felons

Border Patrol's involvement with IBET equals success

Grand Island, N.Y. — U.S. Border Patrol agents assigned to the Integrated Border Enforcement Team (IBET) assisted with the arrest of two wanted felons; one from Canada and the other an escaped felon from the U.S.

Border Patrol agents provided intelligence information that lead to the arrest of Giorgio Cote-Mendoza, a Columbian Citizen, on October 16. Cote-Mendoza has been on Canada Border Services Agency's (CBSA) most wanted list for his ties to organized crime and for residing in Canada illegally. The arrest was conducted in Toronto, Ontario.

The second person arrested was Steven Pieczynski, a U.S. citizen with multiple warrants. Pieczynski escaped from a prison in Bucks, Pa., and a nation-wide warrant for his arrest was issued. Border Patrol agents discovered a stolen vehicle abandoned in Lewiston, N.Y. along with information that Pieczynski may have attempted to smuggle himself into Canada. Video evidence of Pieczynski crossing illegally into Canada via kayak was provided by Lewiston Police. Border Patrol agents gathered further information while working with Canadian Law Enforcement partners, and Pieczynski's location was discovered. On October 23, Canadian Law Enforcement agencies and IBET members arrested Pieczynski in Toronto.

Pieczynski is being held in Canada awaiting an immigration hearing. He will then be deported back to the United States to face his criminal charges.

The Integrated Border Enforcement Team (IBET) is comprised of both Canadian and American law enforcement agencies. This cooperative bi-national initiative focuses on national security and targets organized crime as well as other criminal activity between the ports of entry.

Customs and Border Protection welcomes assistance from the community. Citizens can report suspicious activity to the Border Patrol and remain anonymous by calling **1-800-331-0353** toll free.