

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Tami Lawlor
(561) 963-4474

Tip Leads to Arrest of Pharmacy Robbery/Kidnapping Suspect *Crime Stoppers to Pay \$1000 Reward to Local Tipsters*

December 19, 2005, Hilliard, OH — Joshua Leach, accused of robbing a local CVS pharmacy and kidnapping the pharmacist is in custody as a result of a reward offered by *Central Ohio Crime Stoppers*. The arrest follows others in communities around the country where Crime Stoppers Programs have offered rewards for information on pharmacy robberies.

Joshua Leach allegedly robbed a CVS in Hilliard on November 20th 2005 and took the pharmacist hostage as he fled the scene with a female accomplice. After forcing the female pharmacist into the car and driving several miles, he released her unharmed. Leach's image was captured on closed circuit video footage.

In November, *Central Ohio Crime Stoppers & The Hilliard Police Department* asked for the public's help identifying and locating the suspect. They offered a \$1,000 cash reward for information that could help the Hilliard Police Department with its investigation. Several local residents in the Greater Columbus area called the tip line and gave information that led to the arrest of Joshua Leach.

"We received a couple of tips from residents within two hours of notifying the public of the incident," said Hilliard PD Lt. Scalf. "It is extremely helpful when the public comes forward with information that can lead to the arrest of suspects."

The Hilliard Police Department and Central Ohio Crime Stoppers are part of the ongoing *RxPATROL/ Crime Stoppers* collaboration that is working with local police in communities across the country to solve pharmacy robberies. Through this collaborative partnership, Crime Stoppers will be providing local tipsters with cash rewards for information that leads to arrests. The cash rewards are donated by pharmaceutical company Purdue Pharma L.P., the company that distributes OxyContin® (oxycodone HCl controlled-release) Tablets.

This recent arrest follows another in Jersey City, NJ, in which three suspects were arrested and charged in connection with five pharmacy robberies and the theft of \$30,000.00 - \$50,000.00 in painkillers in each robbery. *RxPATROL - Crime Stoppers* has also funded rewards for arrests of pharmacy robbery suspects in similar cases in Chambersburg, PA, and Louisville, KY.

"*RxPATROL Crime Stoppers* is very thankful for the public's continued support in helping local law enforcement with their investigation of local pharmacy robberies. These recent arrests prove that the public's help is vital to helping us solve these cases," said *RxPATROL Crime Stoppers* coordinator Chuck Kreimer. "Collaborating with Crime Stoppers is a great example of how public and private sector interests can successfully partner to make a difference," says Aaron Graham, Vice President and Chief Security Officer for Purdue Pharma.

All information that comes into *RxPATROL Crime Stoppers* tip line as well as any other *Crime Stoppers* tip line is kept completely confidential. Callers never have to give their names or appear in court. Anyone with information about any recent pharmacy robberies in the area is asked to call *RxPATROL Crime Stoppers at 1-888-4RXTIPS or their local Crime Stoppers program*.

###