Date: June 22, 2022

To: All Media Outlets for Public Dissemination

From: Captain James Schueller, Investigations and Security Services

Re: Media Release- Deceased Person

On Friday June 17th at 5:51 P.M., Olmsted County Deputies were dispatched to a deceased person call in the area of CR 2 and 70th Ave NE in Haverhill Township. The reporting party on this call had been mowing tall grass adjacent to a crop field in the area and saw what appeared to be a tarp in the grass ahead of him. He moved closer to get a better view and saw what he believed to be a human arm sticking out from under the tarp. He immediately stopped and contacted Law Enforcement. The first Deputy arrived on scene a short time later and confirmed it was a deceased person under the tarp. Deputies established a perimeter around the area and additional Sheriff's Office personnel were called to begin the investigation. The condition of the deceased made it extremely difficult to determine the identity of our victim. Because OCSO did not have any open missing person cases, OCSO Investigators spoke with the Rochester Police Department regarding any recent missing persons reports they were working on in an attempt to possibly help identify the deceased on our scene. RPD Investigators provided us with reports of two recent missing persons cases they were working on.

OCSO requested the assistance of the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) who arrived on scene and coordinated scene processing and evidence collection. Based on the names provided by RPD and the assistance of the BCA Crime Scene Team, we began using available investigative methods to determine the identity of the deceased. The Southern Minnesota Regional Medical Examiner's Office responded to the scene and took possession of the deceased to complete an autopsy. Investigators from our office worked on the case throughout the weekend and were present when the autopsy was done on Monday morning, June 20th. At that time, we were still not able to positively identify the victim. Members of the BCA latent prints division responded to the Medical Examiner's Office on Tuesday June 21st and were able to get partial prints from the deceased. Through this process, we were able to identify our victim as Tia Mercedes Arleth, a 28 year old female with a listed address out of Minneapolis but with past residency and significant history and ties to Rochester. It should also be noted that Ms. Arleth was one of the persons RPD had identified as one of the two missing persons in the information they had shared with us the night of the original call.

Ms. Arleth was reported missing to the Rochester Police Department on June 12th, by her mother. She was last seen in the Rochester area on May 30th.

The location and condition in which Ms. Arleth was found are considered suspicious in nature. The Sheriff's Office is currently investigating this incident and are asking the public for any information they may have to help in the investigation.

Last and certainly not least, our condolences go out to the family and friends of Ms. Arleth. Their loss should be on the forefront of your and our minds as we work to find answers as to their loss.