



# INGLEWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT

# NEWS RELEASE

**CITY OF INGLEWOOD, CALIFORNIA**

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September 14, 2011

## **ARREST IN ROBBERY STRING**

On Friday, September 9, 2011, at approximately 12:45 PM, Inglewood police officers arrested an 18-year-old Inglewood man for robbery after he forcibly took a gold necklace from a 59-year-old woman. The robbery was part of a pattern of snatch-and-grab thefts of gold necklaces that had been occurring in Inglewood and throughout Los Angeles County this year. Law enforcement officials surmise that the robberies are the result of skyrocketing gold prices.

In this case, Maleek Lawaun Thomas was seen by a citizen witness as he snatched the necklace from the victim's neck and ran from the scene in the area of Prairie Avenue and 107<sup>th</sup> Street. The witness followed Thomas and called Inglewood Police as the suspect was being chased by the adult son of the victim. The police quickly arrived at the location and detained Thomas for investigation. He was eventually identified, arrested, and booked for robbery. Thomas is being held in lieu of \$350,000 bail.

The timely police response was aided by the fact that Inglewood PD was conducting a task force operation to address the "Gold Chain" robbery spree and had extra personnel on duty. The task force was scheduled for Friday and Saturday, and it included plain clothes personnel in areas where prior robberies had occurred. Inglewood has had more than 35 similar robberies since the beginning of the year. As a part of the task force operation, police personnel also teamed up with citizen block clubs and neighborhood watch groups to distribute flyers to area residents warning about the crimes, along with tips to minimize their chances of being victimized. Over 20 Inglewood residents came out to help pass out flyers.

Investigators collected evidence that linked Thomas to three of the robberies, and they are continuing to look at leads that might connect him and others to additional crimes. The last arrest, related to the snatch-and-grab series, was made by Inglewood Police in May. It is not clear yet whether the arrest of Dajuan Jackson is related to this recent incident, but investigators believe that more suspects remain at large. Inglewood Police is continuing the campaign to warn the community and is soliciting additional information in the investigation.

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JACQUELINE SEABROOKS  
Chief of Police

Anyone with additional information about these crimes is requested to contact Detective Torres at 310-412-5249 or the 24-hour anonymous hotline number at “**888-41-CRIME**” (**888-412-7463**).



Maleek Lawaun Thomas  
Charged with Robbery

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