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OVER 24 YEARS IN PRISON FOR ORCHESTRATING ARMED DELIVERY OF METHAMPHETAMINE

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown announced today that United States District Judge Frank C. Damrell Jr. sentenced VICTOR MANUEL ALVARADO, 30, of Corning, to 24 years and seven months in prison for his role in a late-night delivery of four pounds of methamphetamine.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration and Net-5, a drug task force made up of members from various law enforcement agencies in Yuba and Sutter Counties.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys Phil Ferrari and Todd Pickles, who prosecuted the case, ALVARADO is one of seven defendants indicted in a case arising from a February 2007 methamphetamine delivery in a Yuba City Wal-Mart parking lot. ALVARADO pleaded guilty on April 20, 2009 to conspiring to distribute methamphetamine, distributing methamphetamine, and possessing a loaded firearm in furtherance of the conspiracy.

Three of ALVARADO's co-defendants went to trial, which lasted four weeks and concluded on June 10, 2008. The evidence introduced at the trial showed that beginning in December of 2006, the DEA used an informant to negotiate the terms of an anticipated methamphetamine deal with an individual in Colusa. Those negotiations continued and ALVARADO emerged as the central figure in the effort to deliver a large amount of methamphetamine to the informant.

On February 24, 2007, ALVARADO and five others traveled from Corning to Yuba City to deliver approximately four pounds of methamphetamine. They arrived at the Wal-Mart parking lot just before midnight. ALVARADO was in possession of a loaded .357 caliber handgun. Three other co-defendants, recruited and armed by ALVARADO, provided security with an SKS military rifle. Another co-defendant drove the methamphetamine down in ALVARADO's Toyota Sequoia. Once in the parking lot, the informant was shown the methamphetamine, and law enforcement moved in and made arrests.

Judge Damrell relied upon the quantity of drugs involved, the presence of firearms, and ALVARADO's central role in the conspiracy in arriving at the sentence imposed. He cited "overwhelming evidence" that ALVARADO was the "alpha-male" and the "person in charge" of the conspiracy. He emphasized that the methamphetamine could have damaged many lives, and that given the presence of loaded weapons, it was very fortunate that no one got hurt.

With the exception of one co-defendant acquitted at trial, all of ALVARADO's co-defendants have now been sentenced:

Jose Luis Villanueva Diaz received 135 months (11 years, 3 months),
Sabas Miramontes received 151 months (12 years, 7 months),
Jesus Ontiveros received 235 months (19 years, 7 months),
Margarito Ramirez Caballero received 292 months (24 years, 4 months),
Ricardo Diaz received 295 months (24 years, 7 months).

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