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MEXICAN NATIONALS SENTENCED ON NARCOTICS CHARGES

Tampa, Florida - U.S. Attorney A. Brian Albritton announces that U.S. District Judge Steven D. Merryday yesterday sentenced Octaviano Pineda-Sanchez (age 22, of Mexico) to seventeen and one-half years in federal prison for his role in a methamphetamine trafficking organization. Pineda-Sanchez, along with his two co-conspirators, Juan Bacho-Cortez and Magin Avila-Avellaneda, had pleaded guilty to conspiracy to possess with Intent to distribute fifty grams or more of Methamphetamine. Bacho-Cortez and Magin Avila-Avellanda previously were sentenced to nine years and five years in federal prison, respectively.

According to court documents, between January 23, 2009, and February 9, 2009, Pineda-Sanchez, Bacho-Cortez and Avila-Avellaneda met on three separate occasions with undercover law enforcement agents in Polk County, Florida, to discuss selling large quantities of methamphetamine. On February 9, Bacho-Cortez delivered to the undercover officers 1,571 grams (3 pounds) of methamphetamine, while Pineda-Sanchez and Avila-Avellaneda provided protection for the sale from a vehicle close by. All three were then arrested, and Bacho-Cortez directed law enforcement to an additional 954.7 grams (2 pounds) of methamphetamine buried in the backyard of the house the three shared.

This case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Stacie B. Harris.