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News Release

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8 connected to Duluth cocaine distribution ring sentenced

Eight defendants were recently sentenced for their roles in one of the Duluth region's largest known drug operations to date. The defendants participated in a cocaine and crack cocaine ring that was responsible for the sale and distribution of 40-60 kilograms of the drugs in the Duluth and Superior, Wisc., areas.

Sentenced today in Duluth by United States District Court Judge James Rosenbaum were: Darryl Lajoune Brown, 33, no address; Sidney Jermaine Boyd, 28, Duluth; Robert Kennedy Price, 40, Duluth; and Lavioris Jerry Robinson, 25, Duluth.

"The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, along with our state and local partners, applaud these important sentencing as a continuing result of great law enforcement efforts," said Bernard J. Zapor, Special Agent in Charge of the ATF's St. Paul Field Division.

Brown was sentenced to 84 months in prison on one count of possession with intent to distribute in excess of 5 grams of cocaine base, commonly known as crack cocaine. Boyd was sentenced to 102 months in prison on one count of distribution of in excess of 5 grams of cocaine base. Price was sentenced to 88 months in prison on one count of aiding and abetting the distribution in excess of 5 grams of cocaine base. Robinson was sentenced to 144 months in prison on one count of distribution in excess of 5 grams of cocaine base.

On Oct. 16 in Duluth, Judge Rosenbaum sentenced: Clarence James Beloch, 21, Duluth; Travion Edward Davis, 24, unknown address; Christopher Gray, 24, unknown address; and Jabari Omar Samuel, 29, Duluth.

Beloch was sentenced to 60 months in prison on one count of aiding and abetting the distribution in excess of 5 grams of cocaine base. Davis was sentenced to 24 months in prison on one count of distribution in excess of 5 grams of cocaine base. Gray was sentenced to 70 months in prison on one count of distribution in excess of 5 grams of cocaine base. Samuel was sentenced to 132 months in prison on one count of aiding and abetting the distribution in excess of 5 grams of cocaine base.

The eight defendants were indicted in July 2007, along with 19 others. According to federal search warrants filed in the case, law enforcement in the Duluth area had been investigating the ring for the past two years. A local store was allegedly used as a front for the distribution.

Cocaine is a powerfully addictive stimulant that directly affects the brain, and crack cocaine is the free-base form of the drug. This form comes in a rock crystal that can be heated and its vapors smoked. The term “crack” refers to the crackling sound heard when it is heated.

Thirteen other defendants have already been sentenced in connection with this case. Twelve were sentenced in May and one was sentenced in September. The sentencing dates for the remaining six defendants have not been scheduled.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Lake Superior Drug and Gang Task Force, the Duluth Police Department and the ATF, with assistance from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Christian S. Wilton and W. Anders Folk.