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News Release

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2 sentenced for distributing methamphetamine

The second of two defendants was sentenced today in federal court for distributing the highly addictive and dangerous drug methamphetamine.

On Feb. 5 in Minneapolis, United States District Court Judge James Rosenbaum sentenced Fidel Mendez-Manzanarez, 32, Maplewood, to 120 months in prison and five years supervised release on one count of conspiracy to distribute 500 or more grams of methamphetamine. Mendez-Manzanarez was indicted on June 16, 2008, along with two other defendants. Mendez-Manzanarez pleaded guilty on Sept. 9, 2008.

Javier Manzanarez-Rodriguez, 27, Maplewood, was sentenced on Jan. 28, 2009, to 60 months in prison and five years supervised on one count of conspiracy. He pleaded guilty on Sept. 25.

A third defendant, Arturo Manzanarez-Perez, 28, Maplewood, was sentenced on Jan. 27 to 15 months in prison and three years supervised release on one count of unlawful re-entry after removal. He pleaded guilty on Sept. 10.

According to their respective plea agreements, Mendez-Manzanarez and Manzanarez-Rodriguez admitted that from May 26, 2008, through May 29, 2008, they knowingly and intentionally conspired with each other to distribute approximately 879.8 grams of methamphetamine. Manzanarez-Perez admitted that he is an illegal immigrant who knowingly re-entered the U.S. He was removed from the U.S. in March 2006 following a conviction for first-degree possession of a controlled substance.

According to a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) affidavit, the Metro Gang Strike Force learned that Manzanarez-Perez was selling large amounts of methamphetamine in the Twin Cities area. Authorities arranged a controlled buy at Manzanarez-Perez's Maplewood apartment on May 29, 2008, and officers observed all three defendants present during the transaction.

Later that day, officers arranged a second controlled buy and learned that the drugs had

arrived in a truck parked in the rear of the apartment building. Police approached the truck and seized approximately 2 pounds of methamphetamine that was located on the back seat floor and on the front console area. A subsequent search of the apartment resulted in the seizure of more methamphetamine, the affidavit states.

This case was the result of an investigation by ICE, the Metro Gang Strike Force and the Maplewood Police Department. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeffrey M. Bryan.