

NEWS

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Cumberland County Cocaine Supplier Sentenced to 360 Months in Prison

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CAMDEN – A Cumberland County cocaine wholesale supplier was sentenced to 360 months in federal prison jury today for his conviction on charges in connection with the distribution of kilogram quantities of cocaine to street level drug trafficking networks that were responsible for the distribution of large quantities of powder cocaine and crack cocaine in the Bridgeton area, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Jerome B. Simandle, who presided over the 3-week trial, also ordered Malik Nelson, 27, of Bridgeton, to serve 10 years of supervised release upon the completion of his prison term. Nelson has been held in federal custody since his arrest on Aug. 19, 2006.

On April 22, 2008, after 4 hours of deliberations, the jury convicted Nelson of all three counts contained in a Superseding Indictment. Nelson was convicted on one count of drug trafficking conspiracy and two counts of possession with intent to distribute 500 grams or more of cocaine.

The case was tried by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Diana V. Carrig and Matthew Skahill.

During the trial, the jury heard the testimony of 11 government witnesses, including that of Felipe Telleria, and viewed hundreds of pieces of evidence regarding Nelson's conspiracy with others to assist Telleria's organization in distributing multi-kilogram shipments of cocaine. In convicting Nelson, the jury found that from July 2004 to July 2006, Nelson received and redistributed more than 5 kilograms of cocaine from Telleria's organization.

On July 27, 2006, federal charges were brought against Telleria, 36, a.k.a. "Alex," of Vineland, and 11 other defendants who were named in any of five separate Indictments or one Superseding Indictment. The Indictments and Superseding Indictment were the result of a long-term investigation DEA and the Cumberland County Narcotics Task Force.

The three-count Superseding Indictment, which was returned by a grand jury in May 2007, charged Nelson, along with Felipe Telleria, Jose Luis Delgado, 24, of Vineland, and six others with conspiring from July 2004 through July 11, 2006, to distribute and possess with intent to distribute large amounts of cocaine and crack cocaine. On July 11, 2006, Felipe Telleria and Jose Luis Delgado were arrested in Vineland on an earlier one-count Indictment. Also charged in the earlier Indictment were Fernando Cuevas, who was arrested near Toledo on July 10 by the Ohio State Police, and Juan Carlos Garcia, who was arrested on July 14 in Woodbine. Cuevas was a supplier of cocaine to Telleria, and Garcia distributed cocaine he obtained from Telleria.

According to trial evidence and testimony, Nelson was Telleria's largest customer of

kilogram quantities of cocaine.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Simandle consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited the Special Agents of the DEA, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Gerald P. McAleer in Newark, and Investigators with member agencies of the Cumberland County Narcotics Task Force, under the direction of Cumberland County Prosecutor Ronald J. Casella, with developing the investigation which resulted in the Superseding Indictment and Indictments.

The Cumberland County Narcotics Task Force is comprised of the Cumberland County Prosecutor's Office, DEA, FBI, ATF, New Jersey State Police, Vineland Police Department, Bridgeton Police Department, Millville Police Department.

The Government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Diana V. Carrig and Matthew Skahill of the U.S. Attorney's Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense attorney: Harold B. Shapiro, Esq. Vineland