

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Member of Cumberland County Cocaine Trafficking Network
Sentenced to 70 Months in Federal Prison

(More)

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CAMDEN - A member of a cocaine trafficking network that was responsible for the distribution of large quantities of cocaine in the Cumberland County area was sentenced to 70 months in federal prison today for his role in the conspiracy, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Jerome B. Simandle also ordered Fernando Cuevas, 29, a.k.a. "Cano," of Vineland, to pay a \$3,000 fine and to serve five years of supervised release upon the completion of his prison term.

Cuevas pleaded guilty before Judge Simandle on June 19, 2007, to a one-count Superseding Information, which charged him with conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine.

At his plea hearing, Cuevas admitted that from September 2005 through July 2006 he agreed with Felipe Telleria, 35, a.k.a. "Alex," of Vineland, and others to distribute at least 12 kilograms of cocaine in Vineland. Cuevas admitted that he obtained kilogram quantities of cocaine from others and supplied them to Telleria.

On July 10, 2006, Cuevas was arrested in Ohio while he was in possession of seven kilos of cocaine. Two of the kilos were stored the trunk of a vehicle he was driving, which actually belonged to Telleria. The additional five kilos were hidden in a special "trap" hidden in the dashboard of the car.

Telleria and his associate, Jose Luis Delgado, 24, of Vineland, were arrested on July 11, 2006, in Vineland on an earlier one-count Indictment. Telleria pleaded guilty to a one-count Superseding Indictment on March 9, which charges conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 5 kilograms or more of cocaine and 50 grams or more of crack cocaine. Delgado pleaded guilty on June 6, 2007, to one-count Superseding Information, which charges him with conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine. Both defendants have been held in federal custody since their arrest and their sentencings are pending.

In determining the 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, was 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 Gerard 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 comprises 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. Attorney Diana V. Carrig of the U.S. Attorney's Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense attorney: Jeffrey C. Zucker, Esq. Camden