

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 23, 2007

New York Pimp Sentenced to 280 Months in Prison for Operating an
Interstate Organization Using Minors for Prostitution

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TRENTON – A New York City man who led an interstate prostitution enterprise that recruited and prostituted minor girls in several U.S. cities and a second associate pimp were sentenced today to federal prison terms, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher and U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Freda L. Wolfson sentenced Matthew D. Thompson, 37, of the Bronx, a.k.a. “Knowledge,” to 280 months in prison, and ordered him to pay a \$5,000 fine and to serve supervised release for life upon the completion of his prison term.. Thompson has been held in detention since his arrest on Dec. 12, 2005.

Thompson pleaded guilty before Judge Wolfson on Oct. 27, 2006, to one count each of conspiracy to transport minors to engage in prostitution and conspiracy to engage in money laundering.

At his plea hearing, Thompson admitted he was a pimp and organized and managed a prostitution ring operating from at least as early as 1999 and continuing until December of 2005 in various U.S. cities, including Atlantic City, New York (including Manhattan and Hunts Point in the Bronx), Las Vegas, Boston, and Miami.

Judge Wolfson also sentenced Demetrius Lemus, 37, of Bronx, N.Y., to 96 months in prison, and ordered him to pay a \$2,500 fine and to serve supervised release for life upon the completion of his prison term. Lemus has been held in detention since his arrest also on Dec. 12, 2005.. At his plea hearing on Aug 30, 2006, Lemus admitted he was a pimp and that he employed both minor and adult females to work as prostitutes for him. Lemus also admitted that he was an associate of Thompson and assisted him in running his interstate prostitution enterprise.

Other members of the conspiracy, including Melissa Ramlakhan, Anna Argyroudis, Emily Collins-Koslosky, Jacqueline Collins-Koslosky, and Kemyra Jemerson, recruited and transported young girls to and from various cities in order to have them work as prostitutes for him, Thompson admitted. At Thompson’s direction members of the conspiracy would also hide the proceeds of the illegal prostitution enterprise by converting the proceeds into U.S. Postal and Western Union money orders in amounts under the legal reporting requirement of \$3,000. To date, more than \$850,000 in U.S. Postal and Western Union money orders have been identified as having been purchased and used by members of the conspiracy.

In pleading guilty, Thompson agreed to forfeit \$748,243 in funds, three New York properties, one New Jersey property and eight vehicles, all of which were derived from or used in the prostitution enterprise.

To date, Ramlakhan, Argyroudis, Emily and Jacqueline Collins-Koslosky and Jemerson have all pleaded guilty and are awaiting sentencing.

The case is part of the “Innocence Lost” initiative, a cooperative effort to prevent and prosecute cases involving child prostitution between the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Department of Justice, Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. To date, the Innocence Lost Initiative has resulted in 275 open investigations, 697 arrests, 160 informations or indictments, and 136 convictions in the federal and state systems.

In determining the actual sentences, Judge Wolfson 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.

The case was investigated by Special Agent Daniel Garrabrant of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Special Agent Tara Nevrinean of the United States Postal Service, Office of Inspector General and is being prosecuted by Deputy Chief Sherri A. Stephan of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason Richardson of the District of New Jersey’s Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: Mitchell C. Elman, Esq. Ozone Park, New York