

Department of Justice

United States Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr.
Western District of New York

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CONTACT: BARBARA BURNS
PHONE: (716) 843-5817
FAX: (716) 551-3051

THREE DEFENDANTS PLEAD GUILTY TO DRUG CHARGES

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Mykale King, 24, of Buffalo, Jesse Hughes, 32, of Houston, Texas, and Yolanda Hodge, 35, of Buffalo, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara to various narcotics trafficking offenses.

Specifically, Mykale King pleaded guilty to money laundering conspiracy which is punishable by a maximum of 20 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine. Jesse Hughes pleaded guilty to conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and to distribute cocaine which is punishable by a maximum of 20 years in prison and a \$1,000,000 fine. Yolanda Hodge pleaded guilty to using a communication facility to commit a controlled substance offense which is punishable by up to four years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

The defendants were arrested along with 17 others for their involvement in a multi-kilogram cocaine distribution network. To date, 15 defendants have pleaded guilty.

Specifically, on June 8, 2009, Mykale King traveled to Houston, Texas, from Buffalo to deliver a sum of United States currency to Rodney Hill.

Jesse Hughes shipped a package, which he knew to contain cocaine, Atlanta, Georgia, at the request of David Manuel who he knew to be a narcotics trafficker.

On August 5, 2009, law enforcement officials intercepted a cell phone call between Yolanda Hodge and David Manuel as to the defendant wanting to bring cocaine to Manuel.

“Today’s convictions demonstrate that this Office will prosecute all who participate in bringing illegal narcotics into this area and damaging our community,” said U.S. Attorney Hochul. “Whether located here or elsewhere, or responsible for shipping narcotics or handling proceeds – drug traffickers, and those who aid them, need to understand they will be identified and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.”

Today's convictions are the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Safe Streets Task Force under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Christopher M. Piehota, the Drug Enforcement Agency under the direction of Wilbert L. Plummer, Acting Special Agent in Charge, New York Field Division, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco under the direction of Resident Agent in Charge Frank Christiano.

Sentencing for Mykale King is scheduled for September 17, 2012 at 1:00 p.m. before Judge Arcara. Jesse Hughes and Yolanda Hodge will be sentenced on September 18, 2012 at 12:30 p.m., also before Judge Arcara.

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