



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2010
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Chester, PA Drug Dealer Convicted of Cocaine Conspiracy and Money Laundering Charges

David C. Weiss, United States Attorney for the District of Delaware, announced today that Harold Fitzgerald a/k/a "Fitz", of Chester, Pennsylvania was convicted on Monday of conspiracy to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine, two counts of possession with intent to distribute more than 500 grams of cocaine, and money laundering charges. Fitzgerald now faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison and a maximum of life imprisonment. A sentencing date has not yet been set.

Fitzgerald was convicted after a one-week jury trial held in federal court in the District of Delaware. Trial evidence showed that conspiracy members had used Federal Express to ship hundreds of kilograms of cocaine from a source in Houston, Texas to locations in Delaware, Philadelphia, and New Jersey between 2004 and 2006. The packages, each containing two to three kilograms of cocaine, were sent to vacant apartments. Fitzgerald was responsible for coordinating the delivery of the cocaine parcels and he assisted his co-conspirators selling the cocaine.

Law enforcement officers twice witnessed Fitzgerald retrieving the cocaine parcels from apartments in Claymont, Delaware. Evidence from two search warrants also showed that Fitzgerald and his co-conspirators used luxury apartments – at the Christina Landing Apartments in Wilmington, Delaware and at the Victor Apartments in Camden, New Jersey — to count and package money to be sent back to Texas via Federal Express in order to purchase additional cocaine.

The trial and conviction of Fitzgerald was the culmination of a multi-year joint investigation of the entire cocaine operation by federal law enforcement agents from the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Internal Revenue Service. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Ilana Eisenstein and Shawn Weede of the District of Delaware.

Several other members of the cocaine organization, including the Houston-based source of supply for the cocaine, have already pleaded guilty to conspiracy and related charges, and are currently pending sentencing in federal court in the District of Delaware. One other member of the organization, Jeffrey Gray, had been convicted of conspiracy, money laundering, and firearms

charges following a jury trial in May 2008, and was sentenced to 40 years in prison for those offenses.

Assistant United States Attorney Ilana Eisenstein argued in closing that Fitzgerald was an active and integral member of a major cocaine distribution operation which brought millions of dollars worth of cocaine into Delaware, Philadelphia, and New Jersey.

United States Attorney David C. Weiss praised the work of the law enforcement agencies involved in the prosecution stating, "The systematic investigation of the organization has led to the dismantling of a major organization in the tri-state area."

For further information, please contact Assistant United States Attorneys Ilana Eisenstein or Shawn Weede.

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