



Department of Justice

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FORMER DEKALB COUNTY PROBATION OFFICER PLEADS GUILTY TO CRIMINAL CHARGE-FIXING EXTORTION SCHEME

Atlanta, GA - NATALIE NICOLE DUNN, 32, of Ellenwood, Georgia, a former DeKalb County State Court Probation Officer, pleaded guilty late yesterday to conspiracy to commit extortion under color of official right in a criminal charge-fixing scheme.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, "This former DeKalb County Probation Officer has now admitted that she tried to use her position to assist a charged drug dealer in obtaining a dismissal of his case in exchange for cash. Now she will face a federal prison sentence for her intolerable attempt to corrupt the justice system."

According to United States Attorney Nahmias, the criminal information and other information presented in court: In November 2008, an individual contacted the FBI regarding recent communications with DUNN. The source told the FBI that after his arrest for drug offenses in DeKalb County, Georgia, DUNN contacted him and offered to ensure that the source receive a dismissal of his pending criminal charges in exchange for a \$25,000 payment to DUNN and a co-defendant in the case, Keith L. Hughes, who was the Coordinator of the DeKalb County Office of Pretrial Services. In December 2008, at the direction of the FBI, the source paid DUNN two \$5,000 installments to ensure a dismissal of the source's criminal charges.

In December, 2008, the source also met with DUNN and Hughes inside Hughes' office located at the DeKalb County Courthouse. During that meeting, Hughes told the source that DUNN and he would falsely report to the Office of the DeKalb County District Attorney that the source was cooperating in the investigation of others. By doing so, Hughes said that he could ensure that the source's pending drug trafficking charge would be dismissed.

DUNN, along with Hughes, was indicted in March 2009. DUNN pleaded guilty on June 10, 2009, to a criminal information charging one count of conspiracy to commit extortion under color of official right. The charge carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. In determining the actual sentence, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide

appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders. A sentencing date for DUNN has not yet been scheduled by the Court.

Hughes awaits trial on charges of conspiring to commit extortion under color of official right, and attempting to commit extortion under color of official right. No trial date has yet been set.

This case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys Richard S. Moultrie, Jr. and Jeffrey A. Brown are prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.