

Department of Justice

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Western District of New York

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GEORGIA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO DRUG CHARGES

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Louis Manuel, Jr., 32, of Jonesboro, Georgia, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara to possession of cocaine. The charge carries a maximum penalty of one year in prison, a fine of \$100,000, or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert C. Moscati, who is handling the case, stated that Manuel shipped a package containing a quantity of cocaine from Atlanta to Buffalo at the request and direction of his brother, David Manuel, whom he knew to be a narcotics trafficker.

Louis and David Manuel and 18 other defendants were charged in May 2011 for their involvement in a multi-kilogram cocaine distribution network between Buffalo, New York and Houston, Texas. Louis Manuel, Jr. is the third defendant to be convicted in the case.

The plea is 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 Administration, 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 is scheduled for September 7, 2012 at 12:30 p.m. before Judge Arcara.

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