

Department of Justice

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Western District of New York

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BUFFALO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO DRUG CONSPIRACY CHARGES

BUFFALO, N.Y.--U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that David North, Sr., 43, of Buffalo, N.Y., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara, to conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute marijuana. The charge carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Mary Catherine Baumgarten, who is handling the case, stated that North conspired with Derek Frank in his drug-distribution activities in Buffalo. The defendant was paid to drive a pickup truck, in which marijuana was hidden, from Phoenix, Arizona to Buffalo for Frank. Derek Frank then distributed the marijuana to his customers in the Western New York area.

Derek Frank pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute 100 kilograms or more of marijuana, and money laundering conspiracy in February 2012 and will be sentenced on July 9, 2012. In addition, Transportation Safety Administration employee Minetta Walker, U.S. Airways employee Tinisha Tucker-Anthony, City of Buffalo employee Regina McCullen and Miguel Guzman, were each convicted for their role in the drug trafficking conspiracy.

The plea is a part of the ongoing investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Christopher M. Piehota; Transportation Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, under the direction of Federal Security Director, Derek DePietro; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of James C. Spero; and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Wilbert L. Plummer, Acting Special Agent in Charge, New York Field Division.

Sentencing is scheduled for October 3, 2012, at 1:00 p.m., before Judge Arcara.

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