

Department of Justice

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BUFFALO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY TO DISTRIBUTE COCAINE

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Mario Pena, 26, of Buffalo, N.Y., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara to conspiracy to distribute cocaine. The charge carries a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison, a fine of \$2,000,000, or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph M. Tripi, who is handling the case, stated that the defendant agreed to distribute cocaine with his co-defendants in the summer of 2011. On November 22, 2011, Pena and his co-defendants were caught in a house in Buffalo with over 300 grams of cocaine packaged for sale and two loaded firearms. The firearms included a .357 Magnum revolver and an SKS semi-automatic rifle.

The defendant was arrested along with Victor Marshall, Alexy Diaz, Gerry Spencer, and Besari Torres. Pena is the second defendant to be convicted.

The plea is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Christopher M. Piehota, the Buffalo Police Department, under the direction of Commissioner Daniel Derenda, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, under the direction of Resident Agent in Charge Frank Christiano.

Sentencing is scheduled for April 24, 2013, at 1:00 p.m. before Judge Arcara.

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