

# Department of Justice

**United States Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr.  
Western District of New York**

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## **ROCHESTER MAN SENTENCED IN DRUG CONSPIRACY**

ROCHESTER, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Ausberto Vargas, 31, formally of Rochester, N.Y., who was convicted of drug conspiracy, possession of a firearm in furtherance of drug trafficking, attempted extortion by kidnaping and robbery, and money laundering conspiracy, was sentenced to 40 months in prison by U.S. District Judge Charles J. Siragusa.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer M. Noto, who handled the case, stated that Vargas participated in a large, armed narcotics trafficking organization responsible for the receipt and distribution of hundreds of kilograms of cocaine in the Rochester area between January 2007 and October 2008. The defendant was one of 33 defendants charged with federal crimes involving their participation in this armed drug conspiracy that sent and received packages of cocaine via the U.S. Mail from Puerto Rico to Rochester. Proceeds from the drug sales were sent back to Puerto Rico to purchase more cocaine.

Vargas was also involved in an attempted extortion that involved the kidnaping, robbery and beating of an elderly man in an attempt to recover stolen kilograms of cocaine. All 33 defendants have been convicted in this case.

The sentencing is the culmination of a multi-agency investigation under the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HITA) and Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) initiatives. Federal and State law enforcement agencies, including Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearm and Explosives, under the direction of Scott Heagney, Special Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Timothy Kernan, Postal Inspectors of the United States Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Raymond Williams and officers from the Greater Rochester Area Narcotics Enforcement Team, under the direction of Lt. Joseph Morabito worked in concert with the United States Attorney's Office in the year long investigation.

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