



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Two St. Croix Men Sentenced in Federal Court on St. Croix
for Drug and Gun Possession**

St. Croix, USVI – U.S. District Court Senior Sitting Judge Raymond Finch sentenced one St. Croix man to serve over 25 years in prison on gun charges, and another to 10 months for drug possession, United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe announced today.

Errol Nelson, 37, was sentenced Friday to 78 months in prison for possession of a firearm by a felon, five years for possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number, and 15 years for the unauthorized possession of a firearm. Nelson also was ordered to pay a fine of \$25,000. Judge Finch ordered the sentences to run concurrently.

Nelson was convicted by a federal jury of the three firearm possession charges on February 28, 2011. Evidence at Nelson's trial established that the police responded to a domestic dispute between Nelson and his girlfriend. The responding officer informed Nelson that he was responding to a call and that he was going to frisk him for safety. A scuffle ensued, and a firearm fell from Nelson's waist.

On Thursday, Judge Finch sentenced Gerard Velasquez, 20, to 10 months in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release for distribution of cocaine powder. Velasquez pleaded

guilty to two counts of distribution of cocaine powder on July 1, 2011. According to the plea agreement, on May 12, 2010 and on May 14, 2010, Velasquez negotiated the purchase of cocaine powder with an undercover agent. After he negotiated the purchases, Velasquez walked to his co-defendant, retrieved the cocaine, totaling 38 grams, and delivered it to the undercover agent.

Nelson's case was investigated by the Virgin Islands Police Department, and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Rhonda Williams-Henry and Allan John-Baptiste.

Velasquez's case was investigated by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Alphonso Andrews.