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Los Angeles-Area Gang Member Who Trafficked Teens As Prostitutes Sentenced To 30 Years In Federal Prison

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 31, 2014

RIVERSIDE, California – A Lynwood gang member who pleaded guilty to federal sex trafficking charges – admitting that he used force, fraud and coercion to cause teen-age girls to work as prostitutes across Southern California – was sentenced this morning to 360 months in federal prison.

Paul Edward Bell, 30, a member of the Rolling 60s Crips street gang, was sentenced by United States District Judge Virginia A. Phillips.

Bell “not only used his fists, a cane, a shoe, and other objects against the females, he also pepper sprayed one of the victims in her face,” prosecutors wrote in a sentencing brief filed with the court. “He also threatened the victims with physical abuse, put a gun to the head of one of the victims, and locked at least two of the victims in his apartment. The physical and mental abuse and anguish suffered by the victims at the hands of defendant has and will continue to deeply affect the victims and their families.”

The sentencing brief notes that Bell was previously convicted in two prior state court cases with crimes related to sex trafficking.

Bell is among eight defendants convicted in the case stemming from a federal grand jury indictment filed in August 2012.

Bell and his co-defendants used minors as prostitutes for their own financial gain. Bell was the leader of the organization that preyed on vulnerable victims, convinced them to become prostitutes, and verbally and physically abused them when they did not perform as required. Bell specifically admitted that in 2011 he forced at least four minor victims – aged 15 to 17 – to work as prostitutes in Lynwood and Compton.

The other seven defendants in this case who previously pleaded guilty are:

Samuel Rogers, also known as Bone, 24, of Moreno Valley, another alleged member of the Rolling 60s, who pleaded guilty to sex trafficking of a minor and is currently scheduled to be sentenced on April 14;

Gary Rogers, who used monikers such as G Man, 25, of Moreno Valley, another alleged member of the street gang and Samuel Rogers’ brother, who pleaded guilty to conspiracy to engage in sex trafficking and is scheduled to be sentenced on April 11;

Christopher Weldon, Bell’s half-brother, who is also known by several names, including Chris Roc, of Compton, who pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to engage in sex trafficking and received a six-year prison sentence;

Javiya Brooks, who is also known by several permutations of Shady Blue, 21, of Lynwood, who was the lead prostitute for Bell, who pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to engage in sex trafficking and is scheduled to be sentenced on April 21;

Kimberly Alberti, 21, of Riverside, who was the lead prostitute for Samuel Rogers, who pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to engage in sex trafficking and received a two-year sentence;

Kristy Harrell, 22, of Riverside, who was Gary Rogers’ lead prostitute, who pleaded guilty to interstate transportation in the aid of racketeering and is scheduled to be sentenced on April 28; and

Su Yan, 32, of Rosemead, a Chinese national who allegedly assisted Bell with his prostitution business, who pleaded guilty to interstate transportation in the aid of racketeering and was sentenced to 18 months in prison.

This case resulted from an investigation by the Inland Child Exploitation/Prostitution Task Force, which is comprised of agents, deputies and officers with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Riverside County



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Sheriff's Department, the Riverside Police Department, the San Bernardino Police Department, the Pomona Police Department, and the Ontario Police Department.

The investigation in this case began in January of 2011, when the Riverside County Sheriff's Department learned that teen-age girls attending schools in the Inland Empire were being recruited to work as prostitutes. The investigation later revealed that Alberti attended one of the schools and recruited underage females by "grooming them" – or gaining their trust and telling them that they could make large sums of money by working as prostitutes for Alberti's pimp. The girls who were successfully recruited to work as prostitutes were brought to the Los Angeles area, where they were housed at hotels or at the pimps' apartments. Some of the victims were housed at Bell's apartment. The Rogers brothers and Bell also often housed the victim prostitutes at motels located in the Los Angeles area.

The United States Attorney's Office is working with the Justice Department's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section to prosecute this case.

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