



Royal Flush Prosecutors Honored

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Mary E. Rogers and Stephen G. Dambruch are among the recipients of the Department of Justice’s 2006 Director’s Awards, being honored for their work on Operation Royal Flush.

In September 2005, a federal judge sentenced Joel Francisco, the Crown Prince of the Almighty Latin King Nation in Providence, to life in prison for a crack-cocaine trafficking conspiracy. Francisco was the principal defendant in Operation Royal Flush, a multi-agency investigation into drug trafficking among members and associates of the Latin Kings in Rhode Island. Involving nine law enforcement agencies and led by Providence Police and the DEA, the investigation resulted in federal prosecution of 13 gang members and associates, including Francisco, whose street name was “Joey Crack.” About a dozen other defendants were prosecuted on state charges.



Assistant U.S. Attorney Rogers drafted applications for about a half-dozen wiretap orders that enabled agents to monitor conversations among Latin King members and associates about drug deals. It was the first time in Rhode Island that court-approved wire taps were used in an investigation of a street gang.

By November 2004, agents intercepted 32,000 phone conversations. Armed with ample probable cause, Assistant U.S. Attorney Dambruch then drafted applications for seven search warrants, one of which resulted in the seizure of a kilogram of cocaine from Francisco’s stash house. In all, agents seized 24 kilograms of cocaine plus firearms, marijuana, vehicles worth about \$100,000 and an additional \$100,000 in cash. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Rogers and Dambruch secured guilty pleas from twelve of the federal defendants and Francisco’s conviction at trial. In October 2006, the [First Circuit Court of Appeals](#) affirmed Francisco’s conviction and life sentence, calling the evidence of guilt “overwhelming.”

Each year, the Director’s Awards, named for the Director of the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, is bestowed on employees of U.S. Attorney’s offices throughout the country who have distinguished themselves through extraordinary professional achievements and excellence.