

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
Laura E. Duffy***

Assistant U. S. Attorney Alessandra P. Serano (619) 546-8104

For Immediate Release

SAN DIEGO MAN SENTENCED FOR SEX TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN; TRAFFICKING CASES UP SIGNIFICANTLY

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY – March 4, 2013

San Diego - Carlos Alberto Garcia, who made thousands of dollars pimping out underage girls using internet ads, was sentenced in federal court this morning to 12 years in prison plus 10 years supervised release for sex trafficking of children. Garcia pleaded guilty in August and has been in custody since his arrest on June 26, 2012.

The case began as a result of investigations by San Diego Police Department vice detectives in November 2011 and January 2012. Detectives searched online advertisements for escorts, set up dates and discovered the underage girls working as prostitutes. Garcia was eventually identified as their pimp.

According to court documents, one of the girls, age 17, described Garcia as “ruthless” and “crazy” and said he physically assaulted her for hiding \$300. Garcia beat her, stripped her, forced her into a cold shower, poured ice on her, and made her stand in front of an air conditioner.

He then he took her to the Fashion Valley shopping mall and, using the money she'd earned from prostitution, bought himself \$685 sneakers at the Gucci store, according to court records.

Human trafficking is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world today. It is second only to drug trafficking on the list of the biggest and most lucrative illicit enterprises.

Last year, the Department of Justice set a new record in the number of defendants charged in human trafficking cases in a single year. And over the last three years, there has been a 30 percent increase in the number of human trafficking cases charged. Human trafficking cases primarily involve sexual slavery or forced labor.

In the Southern District of California, which includes San Diego and Imperial counties, the U.S. Attorney's office has seen a 600 percent increase in human trafficking cases in the last five years – from just a few to a couple dozen, with scores of defendants charged. Many of these cases involve the sex trafficking of children.

San Diego is a hot spot for these crimes. According to the FBI, this city is among the 13 most active child sex trafficking areas in the nation. Also on the list are Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Here are a few trafficking trends:

-The victims are getting younger. The average entry age of American minors into the sex trade is 12-14 years old. They're not all runaways from broken homes - they're plucked from malls and schools and through the internet via social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

-Gang members are increasingly dealing in the very lucrative crime of trafficking of young girls, and prosecutors around the country are using the RICO statute against them. Federal prosecutors in San Diego have one case in which a federal grand jury indicted 38 defendants and one LLC on a RICO charge. The indictment also included the criminal forfeiture of a hotel where many of the illegal acts took place.

According to court records, three Oceanside Crips gangs teamed up to operate an elaborate sex trafficking ring using the characteristics of a business enterprise - including deals with hotels and motels. Recruitment efforts focused on vulnerable underage girls. They were manipulated with promises of a luxurious lifestyle, intimidation and actual or threatened violence. A prostitute who broke the "rules" would be beaten or subjected to other humiliating punishments. They were traded to other pimps and transported to other states as if they were someone's property.

Of the 39 defendants charged, 35 defendants pled guilty, three were dismissed, one was murdered in a gang related shooting. The defendants who pled guilty received sentences as high as 14 years in prison.

"These prosecutions, here and around the country, are yielding sentences that send an unmistakable message that human traffickers who prey on the most vulnerable among us will be brought to justice," said U.S. Attorney Laura Duffy. "We have a lot of work to do. But together with our law enforcement

partners, our work has saved lives and restored dignity to scores of victims. We've secured long prison sentences against individual traffickers and dismantled organized criminal enterprises, and we will keep on fighting to obliterate this great human rights tragedy.”

A few other examples of similar cases:

-Maurice Lerome Smith was sentenced in December 2011 to 30 years in prison for sex trafficking of children and by force, fraud and coercion. He was indicted in February, 2011, and was convicted by a jury in May 2011. According to court records, Smith picked up his victim on University Avenue: “Defendant ordered her into the car. (The 17-year-old victim) stated that Defendant told her to get in or she would be ‘in pieces in the trunk.’ Defendant drove (victim) to his residence in Oceanside, physically assaulted her with a belt, and had sex with her. The next morning, Defendant drove her down to the Motel 6 on Clairemont to work as a prostitute. Defendant told her to make \$600.00. Defendant booked the room and left her. (The victim) stated she was afraid of Defendant.” Please see 11-cr-0471-BEN-1.

-Jonathan Jamar Sanders was sentenced to 19 years in prison in May 2012 after pleading guilty to sex trafficking of children, aiding and abetting, in January 2012. According to court documents, Sanders met a 15-year-old girl on the street in National City. At first he took her out on dates and started a sexual relationship with her. Then he forced her into prostitution. The girl would later tell federal agents that he'd threatened to beat her if she didn't do it. She believed him, because she'd seen him violently attack another girl – hitting and kicking her so hard while she was on the ground that her body lifted up from the force. Because of our efforts, that gang member was convicted of sex trafficking of children. Please see 11cr1896-DMS.

-Randy Martell Ballard was sentenced to 12.5 years in prison after pleading guilty in November 2012 to sex trafficking of children. According to court documents, Ballard met a fourteen-year-old girl in El Paso, Texas and transported her to San Diego for the purpose of engaging her in prostitution. He purchased a bus ticket for her using a false name. Court documents further show that Ballard posted online prostitution ads on the Internet with a phone number that the minor had in her possession and provided the minor with false identification documents. Please see 12cr2259-BEN.

-Ralph Darnell Redd was sentenced in February 2012 to 15 years in prison after he was convicted by a jury in July 2011 of sex trafficking of children, sexual exploitation of a minor, and distribution of child pornography. According to court records, he also used internet ads to sell the sexual services of a 16-year-old girl who was tattooed with his moniker. Redd penned an autobiography in which he mentions his gang membership, past crimes and convictions and how “spending the whole 90's in and out of incarceration delayed my process of being successful as a rap artist.” Please see 10cr2740-W.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 12cr2999

Carlos Alberto Garcia

SUMMARY OF CHARGE

Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1591(a) and (b) - Sex Trafficking of Children

INVESTIGATING AGENCIES

San Diego Police Department