

Department of Justice

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JULY 19, 2011
www.usdoj.gov/usao/nyw

CONTACT: BARBARA BURNS
PHONE: (716) 843-5817
FAX: (716) 551-3051

MAN AND WOMAN PLEAD GUILTY IN 31-GANG CASE

BUFFALO, N.Y.--U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Toria Hodge, 28, and Damone Brown, 32, both of Buffalo, New York, pleaded guilty to concealing and failing to report the money laundering activities of Glance Ross, a member of Buffalo's 31-Gang before U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara. The defendants were scheduled to begin a jury trial today before Judge Arcara. The charges carry a maximum three years in prison.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael L. McCabe, who is handling the case, the defendants knew that Glance Ross was laundering money by concealing cash in a safe deposit box in Brown's name at a Buffalo branch of Citizen's Bank on Hertel Avenue. In November 2008, agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation intercepted phone calls between Damone Brown and Ross regarding deposits Ross made to the safe deposit box in Brown's name. On November 10, 2008, FBI agents observed both Brown and Hodge enter the bank and make a deposit into Brown's safe deposit box. Agents later recovered \$170,000 in cash inside the box, which constituted proceeds from Ross's cocaine-trafficking activities on Buffalo's east side. Neither Brown nor Hodge reported Ross's money laundering to law enforcement officials.

“Gang members are sometimes assisted by persons who provide certain services apart from drug dealing and firearm possession. As this case demonstrates, our Office - along with our law enforcement partners - will follow the evidence to prosecute all who would harm the community by facilitating a gang’s criminal activities.”

The pleas are the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Christopher M. Piehota and officers from the FBI's Safe Streets Task Force.

Sentencing is scheduled before District Judge Arcara on November 7, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. for Hodge and on November 3, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. for Brown.