



Department of Justice

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COCOA MAN AND WIFE PLEAD GUILTY TO FIREARMS AND DRUG CHARGES

Orlando, Florida- United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill and ATF Special Agent In-Charge Tampa Field Division, Virginia T. O'Brien announced today that MICHAEL DENARD JONES, a 29 year-old resident of Cocoa, Florida, pled guilty yesterday to eight counts, including conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute five grams or more of crack cocaine, possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine, possession with intent to distribute powder cocaine, and possession of a firearm and/or ammunition by a felon. The maximum penalty JONES faces is life imprisonment, a \$4-million fine, and eight years supervised release. JONES also faces a minimum mandatory 10 years' imprisonment on the conspiracy charge.

On April 30, 2008, JONES' wife, TRACI JANE JONES, 22, pled guilty to one count of disposal of ammunition to a felon as part of the same case. On February 15, 2007, TRACI JANE JONES supplied two loaded firearms magazines to her husband in order to complete the sale of a firearm to an undercover agent. The maximum penalty TRACI JANE JONES faces is up to 10 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and three years of supervised release.

According to the plea agreement, between February and October 2007, MICHAEL DENARD JONES participated in a conspiracy to sell both crack cocaine and powder cocaine. On four occasions, JONES sold to an undercover agent with the Bureau of

Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) various quantities of cocaine. Additionally, on two occasions between February and April 2007, JONES sold to the same undercover ATF agent five firearms and ammunition. All of the undercover firearm and narcotics purchases were audio and video recorded.

The case represents the culmination of a cooperative effort between the United States Attorney's Office, the State Attorney's Office for Brevard/Seminole Counties, the City of Cocoa Police Department, the City of Melbourne Police Department, the Brevard County Sheriff's Office, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF"). This is another case prosecuted as a part the Department of Justice program "Project Safe Neighborhoods" - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative with strong support from ATF. United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials. In Brevard County, State Attorney Norm Wolfinger is calling the initiative "Operation Cease Fire." The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns and then swiftly prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws.

The case was prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Craig S. Forrester, who is also an Assistant State Attorney on Mr. Wolfinger's staff.