



U.S. Department of Justice

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FOUR DEFENDANTS SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON ON DRUG CHARGES

ROCKFORD — A fourth defendant was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Frederick J. Kapala, for his role in a drug conspiracy and for illegally re-entering the United States after deportation. CELESTINO ALVAREZ-MONTEJANO, 23 (also known as "Ivan Candelario-Figueroa," and "Salvador Baldovinos"), a citizen of Mexico found in Winnebago County, Ill., was sentenced today to 110 months in federal prison for his role in a drug conspiracy and illegally re-entering the United States after deportation. The defendant, who pled guilty to the charges on July 9, 2012, was also ordered to surrender to immigration authorities following his release from prison, as well as service a period of supervised release of 5 years following his release from prison.

According to the written plea agreement, between March 2010 and October 2011, Celestino and his co-defendants conspired to distribute at least 3,000 kilograms of marijuana and 15 kilograms of cocaine. During the conspiracy, Celestino lived in the Cincinnati area, and maintained a "stash house" in Loves Park, Ill. to store cocaine and large quantities of marijuana for distribution. Another co-defendant, CYNTHIA M. ORNELAS, 23, lived at that residence, and was paid by Celestino to transport marijuana from Chicago to the residence in Loves Park for distribution. In addition, Celestino admitted that he provided his brother and co-defendant MARIO ALVAREZ-MONTEJANO, 35 (also known as "Sergio Alvarez-Chavez," "Primo," and "Jose Padilla"), who lived in Roscoe, Ill., with large quantities of marijuana that Mario distributed in the Rockford area. Specifically, between May 2011 and September 2011, Mario sold 12 kilograms of marijuana to a confidential informant. Celestino and

Mario then delivered the bulk cash drug proceeds to a specific location or used others to wire transfer the money from their drug sales to Mexico through various money service businesses in the Rockford area. Celestino also admitted in his plea agreement that he arranged for co-defendant DAMON RUCKER, 35, formerly of Freeport, Ill., to purchase 2 kilograms of cocaine for \$64,000. Celestino was arrested on Oct. 8, 2011, with the \$64,000 in his possession.

MARIO ALVAREZ-MONTEJANO, also a citizen of Mexico, pled guilty on July 23, 2012, to charges of conspiracy to distribute and possession with the intent to distribute 1,000 kilograms of marijuana, and for illegally re-entering the United States after being deported. He was sentenced on Nov. 7, 2012, to 75 months in federal prison to be followed by 5 years of supervised release.

CYNTHIA M. ORNELAS pled guilty on March 1, 2012, to conspiracy to distribute and possession with the intent to distribute marijuana and cocaine. On Aug. 16, 2012, Ornelas was sentenced to 58 months in federal prison, to be followed by 3 years of supervised release.

DAMON RUCKER pled guilty on July 31, 2012, to attempting to possess with intent to distribute 2 kilograms of cocaine. He was sentenced on Dec. 12, 2012, to 87 months in federal prison, and 5 years of supervised release following his release from prison.

The sentencing was announced by Gary S. Shapiro, Acting United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Thomas R. Trautmann, Acting Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; W. Larry Ford, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Field Division of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives; and, Richard Meyers, Winnebago County Sheriff. The Cincinnati, Ohio office of the Drug Enforcement Administration assisted in the investigation.

The government was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott R. Paccagnini.

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