

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey
401 Market Street, Fourth Floor
Camden, New Jersey 08101



Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney

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Assistant U.S. Attorney
DEBORAH PRISINZANO MIKKELSEN
856-757-5152

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Wrightstown Man Pleads Guilty to Distribution of Methamphetamine and Illegal Sale of a Firearm

(More)

Greg Reinert, PAO
Public Affairs Office

856-757-5233
973-645-2888

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CAMDEN – A Wrightstown man pleaded guilty today to federal charges for conspiring to distribute methamphetamine and illegal trafficking in firearms, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Roni Amaya-Fiallos, 33, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Jerome B. Simandle to a two-count Information. Judge Simandle continued the defendant's detention pending sentencing, which is scheduled for May 18.

On May 21, 2006, Amaya-Fiallos, Vincente Zuniga-Torres, 27, a.k.a. "Pretty Boy," of New Brunswick, Dulce Gomez-Morales, 27, of New Brunswick, and Joshua D. Smires, 27, a.k.a. "John Reed," of Browns Mills, were arrested on a Criminal Complaint by Special Agents of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the DEA, New Jersey State Police and the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office. The charges are the result of a long term cooperative undercover investigation in crystal methamphetamine and cocaine trafficking in Burlington County.

At his plea hearing, Amaya-Fiallos admitted that from October 2005 through May 2006, he and Zuniga-Torres were partners in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine and cocaine in the Burlington County area. Amaya-Fiallos also admitted that he had distributed quantities of cocaine to Smires and that Gomez-Morales transported narcotics and deposited drug proceeds on behalf of Torres.

Amaya-Fiallos admitted that on at least seven occasions he, along with others, distributed quantities of crystal methamphetamine and cocaine to an undercover officer and others. The drug transactions took place in Cookstown, North Hanover, Wrightstown and Browns Mills, according to Amaya-Fiallos. Amaya-Fiallos admitted that over the life of the conspiracy they distributed more than 243 grams of methamphetamine and 2,110 grams of cocaine.

Furthermore, Amaya-Fiallos admitted that on Dec. 7, 2005, he had a conversation with an undercover officer in which he informed the undercover officer that it would not be a problem for him to obtain a firearm for the undercover officer's purchase. Amaya-Fiallos admitted that on Feb. 4, 2006, he arranged to meet the undercover officer later that day at a 7-11 store in Wrightstown. At the prearranged time, Amaya-Fiallos arrived at the 7-11 store and sold a Kel-Tec Sub 2000, 9-millimeter firearm with a defaced serial number, an extra magazine, and ammunition to the undercover officer in exchange for \$1,500, he admitted.

Zuniga-Torres, Gomez-Morales and Smires are each charged in a complaint, which was signed on May 20, 2006, with one count of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute more than 50 grams of methamphetamine and more than 500 grams of cocaine.

Count One of the Information to which Amaya-Fiallos pleaded guilty, charging conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine, carries a mandatory minimum prison sentence of 5 years and a

maximum sentence of 40 years in prison and a fine \$2 million. Count Two, which charges engaging in the business of dealing in firearms without a required license, carries a maximum sentence of 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

In determining an actual sentence, Judge Simandle will consult the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Kyle Hutchins, in Newark, the DEA, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Gerard P. McAleer, in Newark, Investigators with the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office, under the direction of Prosecutor Robert D. Bernardi, and Troopers with the N.J. State Police, under the direction of Colonel Joseph R. Fuentes, Superintendent, with the investigation leading to the guilty plea.

The Government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Deborah Prisinzano Mikkelsen and Jacqueline Carle of the Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: David S. Rudenstein, Esq. Merchantville