

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Buffalo/Jamaican Drug Dealer Sentenced for Bribery of Postal Carrier

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BUFFALO, N.Y. - Acting U.S. Attorney James P. Kennedy, Jr. announced today that Rudolph Dwight Hanchard, 40, a Jamaican national living in Buffalo, NY, who was convicted of bribery of a public official and attempt to possess with intent to distribute marijuana, was sentenced to 18 months in prison by U.S. District Judge Lawrence J. Vilaro.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Wei Xiang, who handled the case, stated that Hanchard received mail parcels from California and Arizona that contained marijuana intended for sale in Buffalo. Among his associates was then-postal carrier Briana Fugate. The defendant paid Fugate for marijuana worth approximately \$30,000 that Fugate stole from mail parcels that had been entrusted to her for delivery. This arrangement spanned August to October 2015. At the time of Fugate's arrest in October 2015, Hanchard owed her over \$3,000.

The defendant was arrested 2016 while on his way to take custody of another marijuana parcel that had been delivered to a house on Stockbridge Avenue in Buffalo. Hanchard intended to break down that parcel for sale. The defendant was carrying \$9,960 in drug proceeds, which he forfeited as part of his conviction.

Briana Fugate has been convicted and is scheduled to be sentenced on August 17, 2017.

The sentencing is the result of an investigation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of Acting Special Agent-in-Charge Kevin Kelly; the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent-in-Charge Adam S. Cohen; the United States Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Inspector-in-Charge Shelly Binkowski of the Boston Division; and the United States Postal Service, Office of the Inspector

General, under the direction of Special Agent-in-Charge Monica Weyler, Eastern Area Field Office, Philadelphia, PA.

Fugate is scheduled for sentencing on August 17, 2017, at 12:30 p.m. before Judge Vilaro.