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United States Attorney's Office
District of Oregon

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Former Federal Correctional Officer Pleads Guilty for Role in Bribery and Contraband Smuggling Conspiracy

PORTLAND, Ore.—A former federal correctional officer at the Federal Correctional Institute (FCI) in Sheridan, Oregon pleaded guilty today for his role in a bribery and contraband smuggling conspiracy.

Nickolas Carlos Herrera, 32, pleaded guilty to conspiracy, providing contraband in prison, and accepting a bribe as a public official.

According to court documents, from April 2015 until he was placed on administrative leave in December 2019, Herrera was employed as a correctional officer at FCI Sheridan, a federal prison in Yamhill County, Oregon. Herrera used his position to introduce contraband into the facility for the benefit of select inmates including Donte Hunt, 40, who is in custody pending an October 2022 trial on federal drug, gun, and money laundering charges. In the spring of 2019, Herrera began bringing contraband items such as food, clothing, and cigarettes into the facility, which he gave to Hunt in exchange for money.

Later, Herrera brought Hunt marijuana; Suboxone, a Schedule III narcotic; Yeezy brand designer sneakers, and a cell phone. Herrera obtained the narcotics and other items from Elizabeth McIntosh, 34, a non-incarcerated associate of Hunt's. On at least one occasion, Herrera allowed Hunt to use a staff phone at the prison to call McIntosh to arrange the delivery of Suboxone to Herrera. Herrera met McIntosh on multiple occasions to obtain the narcotics and other items for Hunt and accepted payment from McIntosh via transfers of cash and transfers using various digital payment services including PayPal, Apple Cash, and Square.

On September 24, 2020, a federal grand jury in Portland returned an indictment charging Herrera, Hunt, and McIntosh with conspiracy and bribing a public official. Herrera and Hunt were additionally charged with providing contraband in prison.

Herrera and McIntosh were arraigned on November 2 and 4, 2020, respectively. Both were released on conditions. Hunt was arraigned on November 19, 2020 and ordered to continue his pre-trial detention.

Herrera and Hunt face maximum sentences of 25 years in prison, a \$750,000 fine, and five years' supervised released. McIntosh faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison, a \$500,000 fine, and five years' supervised released.

U.S. Attorney Scott Erik Asphaug of the District of Oregon made the announcement.

This case was investigated by the FBI with assistance from the Federal Bureau of Prisons. It is being prosecuted by Ethan Knight and Katherine Rykken, Assistant U.S. Attorneys for the District of Oregon.

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