



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*Margaret M. Chiara  
United States Attorney  
Western District of Michigan*

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*The Law Building, 5th Floor  
330 Ionia Avenue, N.W.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503*

*Mailing Address: (616) 456-2404  
United States Attorneys Office Facsimile (616) 456-2408  
Post Office Box 208  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501-0208*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Elisa Castrolugo  
Assistant United States Attorney  
(616) 456-2404

**Grand Rapids, Michigan – June 14, 2006** – United States Attorney Margaret M.

Chiara announced that Jennifer Lynn Thompson, age 22, of Ionia, Michigan; Gordon Eugene Bowerman, age 35, of Ionia, Michigan; and Valentin Hernandez, age 40, of Palo, Michigan, were sentenced today for their respective roles in a drug conspiracy involving cocaine base (“crack cocaine”), cocaine and marijuana in Ionia, Michigan spanning from at least December 2004 until September 28, 2005. Also sentenced today was Angela Jean Zelinski, age 44, of Greenville, Michigan, for her role in a conspiracy to sell firearms to prohibited persons (convicted felons and illegal aliens) in Ionia County and Montcalm County. The Honorable Paul D. Borman, United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan, presided over these sentencing hearings.

Ms. Thompson pled guilty on March 3, 2006 to possessing with intent to distribute five grams or more of cocaine base (“crack cocaine”), in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1). Ms. Thompson was arrested on September 28, 2005 on state charges, following the execution of a search warrant at her home in Ionia, where officers found a total of 27 firearms and more than five grams of cocaine base. Ms. Thompson was indicted by a federal grand jury on November 9, 2005 and arrested on federal charges on November 28, 2005.

Mr. Bowerman pled guilty on March 3, 2006 to conspiring to distribute 50 grams or more of cocaine base (“crack cocaine”), a quantity of cocaine and less than 50 kilograms of marijuana, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 846 and 841(a)(1). Mr. Bowerman was indicted on the drug conspiracy charge by a federal grand jury on January 5, 2006 for his participation in the sale of cocaine base in Ionia. He surrendered to the authorities on January 24, 2006.

Mr. Hernandez pled guilty on March 8, 2006 to conspiring to distribute 50 grams or more of cocaine base (“crack cocaine”), a quantity of cocaine, and less than 50 kilograms of marijuana, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 846 and 841(a)(1); conspiring to sell firearms to prohibited persons (convicted felons and illegal aliens), in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 371, 922(d) and 922(g)(1); and conspiring to possess firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(o). Mr. Hernandez was indicted on these charges by a federal grand jury on January 5, 2006 for his sales of controlled substances in Ionia County and Montcalm County, illegal purchase of firearms and exchange of drugs for firearms in those counties. He was arrested on federal charges on January 11, 2006.

Ms. Zelinski pled guilty on February 23, 2006 to conspiring to sell firearms to prohibited persons (convicted felons and illegal aliens), in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 371, 922(d) and 922(g)(1). Ms. Zelinski was indicted on the gun conspiracy charge by a federal grand jury on January 5, 2006 for her straw purchase in Montcalm County of handguns intended for convicted felons in Ionia County. She was arrested on January 11, 2006.

At the sentencing hearing for Ms. Thompson, Judge Borman imposed a sentence of 3 years in prison to be followed by a 4-year period of supervised release.

Judge Borman sentenced Mr. Bowerman to 6 ½ years in prison to be followed by a 5-year period of supervised release.

Mr. Hernandez was sentenced to 10 years in prison for both the drug conspiracy count and for conspiring to possess firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, both sentences to run concurrently. He was also sentenced to 5 years in prison for conspiring to sell firearms to prohibited persons to run concurrently to the ten-year sentence. The 10-year term of imprisonment is to be followed by a 5-year period of supervised release for the drug conspiracy count and a 3-year period of supervised release for the other two counts. Following his term of imprisonment, Mr. Hernandez, a Mexican national with a prior felony drug conviction, will also be subject to deportation.

Judge Borman sentenced Ms. Zelinski to 30 days in jail and 5 months of home confinement to be followed by a 2-year period of supervised release.

Co-defendant Anthony Zelinski is scheduled to be sentenced on June 27, 2006. Co-defendants Arthur Trinidad Owens and Joseph Lee Thompson are scheduled to be sentenced on June 29, 2006.

Ms. Chiara commended the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the United States Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the Central Michigan Enforcement Team (CMET) for their excellent work in the case. This case was prosecuted on behalf of the United States of America by Assistant United States Attorneys Elisa Castrolugo and Daniel Mekar.

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