



# Department of Justice

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## **FORMER CEDARTOWN POLICE OFFICER SENTENCED FOR STEALING MONEY FROM HISPANIC MOTORISTS DURING TRAFFIC STOPS**

### ***Damiano Had Admitted Violating Civil Rights By Targeting, Stealing Money***

Rome, GA - DOUGLAS DAMIANO, 37, of Buchanan, Georgia, was sentenced today in federal district court for depriving Hispanic motorists of their civil rights by stealing money from them during traffic stops which he conducted while employed as a police officer by the Cedartown Police Department.

“I commend the collaborative efforts of the Department of Justice and Georgia state officials,” said Wan J. Kim, Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division. “Police officers are sworn to uphold the law, not to break it. While the vast majority of law enforcement officials take their public responsibilities seriously, we are committed to prosecuting those who willfully fail to do so.”

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, “This defendant used his badge to steal money from Hispanic motorists, thinking that they would never dare to come forward and challenge him. His corruption is an unfortunate exception to the professionalism of most police officers, who understand that everyone they encounter, regardless of race or ethnicity, is entitled to lawful treatment and protection of civil rights.”

DAMIANO was sentenced to 2 years, 3 months in federal prison, to be followed by 3 years of supervised release. There is no parole in the federal system. DAMIANO was also ordered to pay full restitution to the victims in the amount of approximately \$2,300.

According to United States Attorney Nahmias and the information presented in court: The Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) received a number of complaints that former Cedartown Police Officer DAMIANO was conducting traffic stops of Hispanic drivers and taking money from them without issuing them citations.

The GBI employed a Gordon County Sheriff's Deputy to conduct an undercover

operation in which the deputy posed as a civilian motorist. DAMIANO stopped the undercover deputy and stole \$100 from him. When the Georgia Bureau of Investigation confronted DAMIANO about the illegal stop and theft, he confessed. DAMIANO was indicted through the Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit on charges of theft by taking and violation of oath of office. The District Attorney of the Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit also immediately referred the matter to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Attorney's Office. DAMIANO pleaded guilty on March 12, 2007 to a Criminal Information on three counts of willfully depriving persons of their right not to be deprived of property without due process.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation with the assistance of the Gordon County Sheriff's Department Detective Division and the Cedartown Police Department.

United States Department of Justice Trial Attorney Kathleen Monaghan and Assistant United States Attorney Joseph Plummer prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is [www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan).