



**Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of Texas**

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FORMER FEDERAL AIR MARSHALS SENTENCED TO PRISON

HOUSTON, TX – Two former federal air marshals that were previously convicted of drug and bribery charges were sentenced to substantial prison terms, United States Attorney Don DeGabrielle announced today.

Convicted of conspiring to possess with intent to distribute cocaine and bribery charges following their guilty pleas earlier this year, Shawn Ray Nguyen, 38, and Burlie L. Sholar, 33, were sentenced to 87 months and 108 months in federal prison, respectively, by United States District Judge Kenneth Hoyt on Monday, August 28, 2006. Nguyen's lesser sentence is a result of the court's consideration of his cooperation with the United States.

Shawn Ray Nguyen and Burlie L. Sholar, III, both of Houston, Texas, were arrested on Thursday, February 9, 2006, as they drove away together from Nguyen's home in northwest Houston, after a cooperating witness had delivered 15 kilograms of cocaine and \$15,000 in cash to Nguyen's home. Nguyen and Sholar had agreed to use their official positions as Federal Air Marshals to bypass airport security at Bush Intercontinental Airport and smuggle the cocaine onboard a flight bound for Las Vegas, Nevada, in exchange for \$15,000. Following the arrest, federal agents recovered the 15 kilograms of cocaine from Nguyen's home. Agents of the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation made the arrests without incident with the invaluable assistance of the Harris County Sheriff's Office.

Nguyen and Sholar, who have been in federal custody without bond since their arrest in February 2006, will remain in federal custody to being serving their respective sentences. Both men have been further ordered to serve a five-year term of supervised release after completing their prison terms.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Mark McIntyre.

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