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United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill
Middle District of Florida

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CONTACT: STEVE COLE

PHONE: (813) 274-6136

FAX: (813) 274-6300

MANATEE COUNTY CRYSTAL METH DEALER SENTENCED TO TEN YEARS

Tampa, Florida - U.S. District Judge Susan C. Bucklew today sentenced Rufino "Hector" Medrano, Jr. to ten years' imprisonment for his part in a methamphetamine distribution ring. Rufino Medrano pled guilty on November 9, 2007 to a charge of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine.

According to court documents, the defendant was part of an organization supplying methamphetamine in Manatee County. In March 2006, the defendant began supplying Jeremy Smith, among others, with methamphetamine for further distribution. The defendant paid Smith in cash (\$50 to \$100) and narcotics (3 to 8 grams of methamphetamine).

On March 27, 2006, Medrano provided twenty eight grams of methamphetamine to Smith who sold it to an undercover Manatee County Sheriff's Office detective for \$1,500. On April 4, 2006, Medrano provided Smith with 40 grams of methamphetamine, which he sold to the undercover for \$2,250. On May 2, 2006, Medrano provided Smith with 163.8 grams of methamphetamine, which he sold to the undercover for \$8,400. Smith and others involved in the conspiracy were sentenced in 2006 by U.S. District Judge James D. Whittemore.

The case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration, Manatee County Sheriff's Office, and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. The case

was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Christopher F. Murray.