The United States Attorney's Office

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
AUSA VICKIE E. LEDUC or
MARCIA MURPHY at 410-209-4885
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MONTGOMERY COUNTY POLICE OFFICER CHARGED WITH DRUG TRAFFICKING CONSPIRACY AND COMPUTER FRAUD

Allegedly Used Her Police Powers to Access Law Enforcement Databases to Obtain Information Concerning a Co-Conspirator and His Drug Associates

Greenbelt, Maryland - Montgomery County Police officer Delores Culmer, age 37, of Silver Spring, Maryland was charged by criminal complaint today with conspiracy to distribute cocaine and fraud in connection with computer use.

The criminal complaint was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein; Chief J. Thomas Manger of the Montgomery County Police Department; Special Agent in Charge William Winter of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations; and Special Agent in Charge Rebecca Sparkman of the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation, Washington, D.C. Field Office. The investigation in this case was initiated by the Montgomery County Police Department.

"There is no allegation that any other police officers were involved in the scheme," said U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein. "I am grateful to Chief Manger and the Montgomery County Police Department for their support."

"Today's charges reflect the outstanding law enforcement partnership between ICE HSI and the Montgomery County Police Department," said William Winter, Special Agent in Charge of ICE HSI in Baltimore. "The law enforcement community here in Maryland and around the country is committed to weeding out those whose acts tarnish the image of the many law enforcement officers who work tirelessly to keep our communities and country safe."

According to the allegations in the affidavit supporting the criminal complaint, from August 2008 to September 2009, Culmer, a Montgomery County Police officer, assisted a co-conspirator's drug trafficking organization by using her police powers to access law enforcement databases to obtain information concerning the co-conspirator and his drug associates. The criminal complaint alleges that the co-conspirator is Culmer's boyfriend or fiancé. Culmer is alleged to have performed computer checks on persons who had drug dealings with the co-conspirator. Culmer also allegedly put assets in her name, including residences in Silver Spring and Cleveland, Ohio, that were actually owned by the co-conspirator in order to hide his ownership of the assets. The co-conspirator allegedly gave Culmer $30,000 in cash drug proceeds to buy the Silver Spring residence, which the co-conspirator used as a "safe haven" from his drug dealing activities in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Cleveland, Ohio. In addition, the co-conspirator is alleged to have given Culmer expensive gifts, including an engagement ring worth approximately $100,000.

The criminal complaint alleges that the co-conspirator had bragged that he could find anyone at anytime. Further investigation of queries made by Culmer on federal and state databases revealed that on November 24, 2009, Culmer ran registration checks on two vehicles owned by a girlfriend of a drug customer who owed a drug debt to Culmer's co-conspirator. Those checks provided Culmer with the current address of the drug customer. Between January and April 2010, the drug customer reported to local police in Pennsylvania that his girlfriend's two vehicles were vandalized. Further, in April 2010, both vehicles were targets of arson.

The complaint alleges that further investigation of queries on federal and state databases executed by Culmer also revealed that on September 13, 2008, July 18, 2009 and July 30, 2009, Culmer conducted computer inquiries on a Pennsylvania car registered to a second drug customer. Law enforcement agents have seen this vehicle parked in Culmer's driveway on several occasions and have seen Culmer driving the vehicle. Pennsylvania Motor Vehicle records showed that the vehicle was owned by the second drug customer. Maryland Vehicle Administration records show that Culmer purchased the vehicle for one dollar from the drug customer in the summer of 2010. Also on September 13, 2008, Culmer allegedly ran a criminal and wanted check on the co-conspirator.

Culmer faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for the conspiracy; and 10 years in prison for fraud in connection with computer use. Culmer had an initial appearance in U.S. District Court in Greenbelt before Magistrate Judge Jillyn K. Schulze today at 12:30 p.m. Magistrate Judge Schulze ordered that Culmer be detained pending a detention hearing scheduled for Friday, March 18, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.

A criminal complaint is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by complaint is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised the Montgomery County Police Department, ICE - Homeland Security Investigations and IRS - Criminal Investigation for their work in the investigation. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant United States Attorney Jonathan Su, who is prosecuting the case.