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LOS ANGELES WOMAN ADMITS BILKING EBAY BIDDERS

A Los Angeles woman pleaded guilty today to federal charges of defrauding more than 50 people who attempted to purchase merchandise through the eBay Internet site and bilking them out of what the government believes to be over $150,000. Juliette Rose Quintero, 23, pleaded guilty this afternoon before United States District Judge Dean D. Pregerson to one count of mail fraud and two counts of wire fraud. According to a plea agreement filed in court, from approximately May 2000 through July 2001, Quintero operated on eBay under several aliases, including "R&J Treasures," Juliet Rose and Jade Rosea. Using these names, Quintero falsely promised to sell users of the on-line auction company various items, including jewelry, musical instruments, car parts and electronic goods. When the eBay users arranged to buy these items, Quintero instructed them to pay for the merchandise via wire transfers to her bank account or by mailing checks to Post Office boxes that she rented or controlled in Claremont and Los Angeles. One victim sent a $3,960 check via United States mail to pay for a diamond ring that was not delivered. Two other victims wire-transferred more than $17,000 to Quintero's bank account for a big-screen TV and a Rolex watch that they never received. While Quintero told her victims that she would send them the merchandise they had purchased once she received payment for the goods, Quintero knew this representation was false. Quintero took the money sent by the winning bidders, but never delivered the merchandise as promised. Quintero is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Pregerson on November 4. When she is sentenced, Quintero faces a maximum possible sentence of 15 years in federal prison. This case is the result of a joint investigation by the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Release No. 02-136

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