Correction Officer sentenced to 8 years in prison for receiving bribe of $100,000 in cocaine

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, announced today the sentencing of ROBERT WHITFIELD, formerly a Correction Officer with the New York City Department of Correction, to eight years in state prison for receiving a bribe of $100,000 in cocaine after he promised to secure an inmate's early release.

On May 30, WHITFIELD, 51, was convicted on all counts following a six-day jury trial before Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Bonnie G. Wittner. Charges include Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First Degree, Conspiracy in the Second Degree, Conspiracy in the Fourth Degree, Bribe Receiving in the First Degree, Bribe Receiving in the Second Degree and Official Misconduct.

The arrest was the result of a long-term investigation by the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), the New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force, which is comprised of agents and officers of the U. S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the New York City Police Department, Immigration and Customs Enforcement – Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the New York State Police, the U. S. Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Marshal Service, New York National Guard, Office of Foreign Assets Control and the New York Department of Taxation and Finance. The Strike Force is partially funded by the New York/New Jersey High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), which is a federally funded crime fighting initiative.

Testimony and other evidence presented at trial proved that WHITFIELD, a veteran Correction Officer assigned to Rikers Island, made an agreement with an inmate to receive three kilograms of cocaine (over 6.5 lbs.) in exchange for shortening the inmate's sentence in the New York City Department of Correction computer system.

WHITFIELD was arrested in the Inwood section of Manhattan at approximately 5:30 p.m. on April 5, 2011, shortly after his designated intermediary, ISLIME DUVIVIER, received the cocaine worth approximately $100,000 from an undercover agent posing as the inmate's cousin. WHITFIELD's car was spotted just a few blocks away from the meeting place, and members of the DEA Strike Force and DOI investigators took him into custody.

During the trial, two inmates testified that WHITFIELD negotiated the bribe in a staff kitchen he oversaw at Rikers Island in early 2011. The inmates' testimony was corroborated by recorded conversations, as well as phone records and cell site data related to WHITFIELD's cell phone.

Testimony at the trial revealed that WHITFIELD approached several inmates at the jail, before he found one who agreed to the bribe plot. Unbeknownst to WHITFIELD, this inmate reported the incident to authorities.

DUVIVIER pleaded guilty to Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Second Degree and was sentenced to three years in prison, with five years of post-release supervision, on November 30, 2012.

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN thanked her office's Special Investigations Bureau, the city's Department of Investigation, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and the New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force.

WHITFIELD CHARGES	SENTENCE (to run concurrent)
Conspiracy 2nd – 1 ct	3 - 5 years in prison
Conspiracy 4th – 1 ct	1 1/3 - 4 years in prison
CPCS 1st – 1 ct	8 years in prison + 5 years of post-release supervision
Bribe Receiving 1st – 1 ct	3 - 9 years in prison
Bribe Receiving 2nd – 1 ct	2 - 6 years in prison
Official Misconduct – 1 ct	1 year in prison