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Monday, March 14, 2022

Federal Correctional Officer Charged and Former Prison Nurse Pleads Guilty in Bribery and Contraband Smuggling Schemes

A former nurse at Leavenworth Detention Center has pleaded guilty to conspiring to smuggle contraband into the prison, and a federal grand jury in the District of Kansas has returned an indictment charging a former correctional officer with a similar scheme.

According to court documents, Jeane Arnette, 61, of Leavenworth, Kansas, previously worked at Leavenworth Detention Center, a privately run, maximum-security federal prison. Arnette used her position as a nurse to smuggle and attempt to smuggle contraband — including cell phones — into the prison.

Arnette pleaded guilty on March 10 to conspiracy to provide contraband to inmates of a federal prison. She is scheduled to be sentenced on June 9 and faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

According to court documents, James Bunch, 40, of Leavenworth, previously worked at Leavenworth Detention Center as a correctional officer. Bunch allegedly used his former position to smuggle contraband, including cell phones, into the prison in exchange for bribes from federal inmates.

Bunch was arrested on March 11 and is charged with conspiracy to commit bribery and provide contraband, and bribery. He made his initial appearance today in the District of Kansas. If convicted of both counts, he faces up to 20 years in prison. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Assistant Attorney General Kenneth A. Polite Jr. of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, Special Agent in Charge William J. Hannah of the Department of Justice Office of Inspector General (DOJ-OIG) Chicago Field Office, and Special Agent in Charge Charles A. Dayoub of the FBI's Kansas City Field Office made the announcement.

The FBI and DOJ-OIG are investigating the cases.

Trial Attorneys Rebecca M. Schuman and Jacob R. Steiner of the Justice Department's Public Integrity Section are prosecuting the cases.

The cases are part of the Justice Department's ongoing efforts to combat prison corruption. In addition to the above matters, the Public Integrity Section recently obtained convictions against four other former Leavenworth Detention Center officials for similar conduct. See [United States v. Jacqueline Sifuentes](#), Case No. 2:21-cr-20053 (D. Kan.); [United States v. Cheyonte Harris](#), Case No. 2:21-cr-20054 (D. Kan.); [United States v. Willie Golden](#), Case No. 2:21-cr-20061 (D. Kan.); and [United States v. Janna Grier](#), Case No. 2:22-cr-20001 (D. Kan.). Separately, the Public Integrity Section has obtained convictions against three former North Carolina prison officials who smuggled contraband, including narcotics, into a state facility in exchange for bribes. See [United States v. Ollie Rose, III](#), Case No. 4:20-CR-96

(E.D.N.C.); [United States v. Kenneth Farr](#), Case No. 4:21-CR-9 (E.D.N.C.); and United States v. Jeremy Chambers, Case No. 4:21-CR-38 (E.D.N.C.).

An indictment is merely an allegation, and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.