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News Releases



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Bay Area siblings sentenced for running fraudulent document ring

OAKLAND, Calif. – Two siblings from Mexico were sentenced Tuesday to 10 months in federal prison following a probe spearheaded by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) that revealed the pair manufactured and sold counterfeit identity and immigration documents in the Bay Area.

Ana Mendoza-Roman, 32, and her brother, Ricardo Mendoza-Roman, 26, both undocumented aliens from Mexico, previously pleaded guilty to conspiring to produce and sell false alien registration cards, which appeared to be issued by or under the authority of the Department of Homeland Security, and Social Security cards, which appeared to be issued by or under the authority of the Social Security Administration. Upon completion of their prison sentences, the defendants will be placed in deportation proceedings.

In August 2012, investigators assigned to the HSI-led Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force executed federal search warrants at the defendants' residence and on two vehicles they owned. During the enforcement action, agents uncovered equipment typically found in counterfeit document mills, including a laminator, printer, computer, seals, card stock and thousands of business cards offering these illegal services. A 9mm Beretta handgun and multiple high-capacity magazines were also seized from the residence.

"These sentences should serve as a reminder about the consequences facing those involved in the counterfeit document trade," said Clark Settles, special agent in charge for HSI San Francisco. "Individuals who knowingly and indiscriminately sell phony identity documents are putting the security of our communities and even our country at risk, which is why these cases are a priority for Homeland Security Investigations."

The sentence was handed down by U.S. District Court Judge Sandra Brown Armstrong following the defendants' guilty pleas. The defendants have remained in federal custody since their arrest Aug. 23, 2012.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Christina McCall and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Tamara Weber prosecuted the case aided by Vanessa Vargas and Jeanne Carstensen. The prosecution was the result of a probe by the HSI-led Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force with additional assistance from the Richmond Police Department.

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.

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