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# Fernando Gomez, a former Chicago DEA agent and Evanston cop, sentenced to 4 years for helping drug traffickers

By JIM MUSTIAN  
ASSOCIATED PRESS | FEB 13, 2020 | NEW YORK



A federal narcotics agent was sentenced Wednesday to four years in prison for his role in a decade-long drug conspiracy that involved the smuggling of thousands of kilograms of cocaine from Puerto Rico to New York.

Prosecutors accused Fernando Gomez of [infiltrating the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration](#) in 2011 and assisting a drug-trafficking ring known for slaughtering its rivals.

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Gomez pleaded guilty last year to selling firearms to a high-volume cocaine trafficker while working as a police officer in Evanston.

He also helped La Organizacion de Narcotraficantes Unidos avoid detection from law enforcement, picked up money for the drug ring and improperly accessed DEA records about a cooperator he believed had information about his co-conspirators.

Gomez, a former U.S. Marine, broke down in Manhattan federal court, apologizing for “poor judgment” that he said stemmed from misguided efforts to protect family members involved in the drug trade.

“The government wants you to make an example out of me,” he told U.S. District Judge Jesse Furman. “I’m not that example. I wasn’t running around like a cowboy with a badge.”

Furman said he was moved by the agent’s contrition but added that Gomez’s betrayal of his badge had left a “stain on the Drug Enforcement Administration and all of law enforcement.”



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Federal sentencing guidelines called for Gomez to spend at least seven years behind bars. But a term that long would be unjust, the judge said, given Gomez’s public service and cooperation with the investigation.

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The judge said there are unanswered questions about why Gomez joined the DEA in 2011, where he worked until his 2018 arrest.

Prosecutors said he lied during his employment screening, but Furman said the government failed to offer persuasive evidence — beyond the claims of a cooperating witness — that Gomez had become a “double agent” in the traditional sense.

Gomez, 42, had been assigned to the DEA's Chicago field division at the time of his arrest.

“This is a breach of duty,” Assistant U.S. Attorney Lara Pomerantz said, condemning both the “serious actions” Gomez took and his years of silence about [La ONU’s drug-trafficking activity](#).

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