

# **Top Lieutenant in New Bedford Fentanyl trafficking ring dismantled by ‘Operation Ghost’, sentenced**

“One of the top lieutenants in the Orlando Badillo Fentanyl Drug Trafficking Organization, which was dismantled in 2019 as a result of a year-long multi-agency investigation led by Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III’s office, was sentenced to prison last week.

David Luna, 40, of New Bedford, pled guilty in Fall River Superior Court on March 2 to indictments charging him with Trafficking in Fentanyl, Conspiracy to Unlawfully Distribute a Class A Drug and Possession of Fentanyl with Intent to Distribute. He was sentenced by Judge Sharon Donatelle to serve five years in state prison, to be followed by two years of supervised probation. He also forfeited nearly \$9,000 in cash illegally obtained through drug distribution efforts.

In June of 2018, a Dartmouth Police Department detective and a Massachusetts State Police Trooper from DA Quinn’s State Police Drug Unit developed credible information that Orlando Badillo was operating a large-scale Fentanyl Drug Trafficking Organization throughout the greater New Bedford area.

This information sparked “Operation Ghost,” a year-long multi-agency effort to stop the trafficking ring. As their investigation progressed, other local and federal law enforcement Agencies joined the probe, including New Bedford Police, DEA, Homeland Security and the Bristol County Sherriff’s Office.

In March of 2019, a Superior Court Judge authorized investigators to lawfully intercept the cell phone

conversations and text messages going to and from the cell phones used by Mr. Badillo and other top members of his organization. Between March 5, 2019 and April 30, 2019, investigators gathered additional evidence, via the wiretap, that explained in detail the intricate workings of the Badillo Drug Trafficking Organization and confirmed the roles played by the various members of the organization. During the wiretap, investigators intercepted numerous calls between Badillo and Luna wherein they discussed Badillo's drug distribution business and what types of methods could be utilized to improve it.

The conspiracy indictment related to the general conspiracy between this defendant and other members of the trafficking ring.

The Trafficking Indictment related to an April 19, 2019 incident where investigators intercepted cell phone communication between defendant Luna and a customer, whereby they agreed to meet at the Walmart in Fairhaven to conduct the narcotics transaction. Investigators set up surveillance and witnessed the sale of 50 grams of Fentanyl by this defendant and seized the drug from the customer immediately afterwards.

The Possession with Intent to Distribute indictments came as a result of the execution of a search warrant executed at Luna's Arlington Street apartment towards the end of the investigation on April 30, 2019.

This defendant played a major role as a distributor of large quantities Fentanyl and Heroin in the Greater Bristol Country area. But he was more than just a drug distributor, he was also a trusted member of the Badillo Drug Trafficking Organization, and he was often called upon to give advice and counseling on the organization's illegal business practices.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Steve Butts, the chief of DA Quinn's Narcotics Prosecution Unit.

"I am pleased this defendant was held accountable for his leadership role in the Badillo Fentanyl Trafficking Organization. This defendant and others in the organization were profiting off of the addiction of people in our communities. The sentence holds him accountable and protects the public from him continuing to sell large quantities of drugs," District Attorney Quinn said. "