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County Narcotics Task Force Seizes \$25,000 in Cocaine

Mercer County Prosecutor Joseph L. Bocchini Jr. announced that an investigation led by his Special Investigations Unit (SIU), under the command of Lt. Mike Novembre, has resulted in one arrest, and the seizure of nine ounces of powder cocaine and a handgun.

Bocchini stated that his SIU received information that an individual identified as Eric Deltoro would be traveling from Vermont to the Hamilton Township area to purchase a large quantity of powder cocaine. An investigation ensued and on Wednesday, January 30, was observed by officers purchasing gas on South Broad Street in Hamilton. At approximately 8:45 p.m., Hamilton police conducted a motor vehicle stop and Deltoro was detained without incident. Deltoro's wife and young son were also in the 2007 Nissan Pathfinder.

Detective Joe Angarone utilized his drug detecting canine, Bella, on the vehicle and she gave a positive reaction for the scent of narcotics. The vehicle was towed and a search revealed a cloth bag inside a rear passenger side compartment containing approximately nine ounces of powder cocaine and a fully-loaded .40 caliber Glock semi-automatic handgun with a laser sight. A search of Eric Deltoro turned up \$2,375.

In addition to SIU officers and Hamilton police, the Mercer County Sheriff's Office and Ewing and Lawrence police participated in the investigation.

Novembre stated that the approximate street value of the seized cocaine is more than \$25,000.

Deltoro, 38, of Websterville, Vt., was charged with possession of a controlled dangerous substance, possession with the intent to distribute, possession with the intent to distribute within 1,000 feet of a school and possession of a firearm while committing a narcotics offense. He is being held at the Hamilton Police Department in lieu of \$250,000 bail. Deltoro's wife was not charged and released.

Despite having been charged, every defendant is presumed innocent until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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