



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COLUMBIA MAN SENTENCED FOR DISTRIBUTING ECSTASY

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Columbia, Mo., man was sentenced in federal court today for distributing ecstasy in the Columbia area.

Eric Lee Ward, 20, of Columbia, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey this afternoon to two years in federal prison without parole.

On Oct. 4, 2002, **Ward** pleaded guilty to an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on March 9, 2001, in Jefferson City. By pleading guilty, **Ward** admitted he sold 100 ecstasy pills for \$2,300 on Aug. 31, 2000, in Columbia.

A co-defendant in the case has also pleaded guilty to distributing ecstasy. **Logan Drew Patton**, 40, also of Columbia, pleaded guilty to distributing ecstasy in Columbia on Aug. 23, 2000. **Ward** and **Patton** were roommates and students at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

As a result of his plea agreement, **Patton** may be sentenced up to 20 years in federal prison without parole and may be ordered to pay a fine up to \$1 million. **Patton's** sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. A sentencing hearing for **Patton** will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the U.S. Probation Office.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony P. Gonzalez. It was investigated by Missouri State Highway Patrol and MUSTANG (Mid-Missouri Unified Strike Team and Narcotics Group).

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

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