

# NEWS RELEASE

R. Andrew Murray  
District Attorney

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## Juries convict habitual felons; 6 defendants enter guilty pleas

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Working in three courtrooms, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Habitual Felon Team tried three defendants during the week of February 6, 2017. Another six defendants entered guilty pleas. These proceedings were held in courtrooms 5110, 5130 and 5370 before The Honorable Eric L. Levinson, The Honorable Richard L. Doughton and The Honorable Robert C. Ervin, Superior Court Judges.

Jermaine Earl Hicks, 32, was tried for 1) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, 2) possession with the intent to sell or deliver cocaine, 3) possession with the intent to sell or deliver marijuana, 4) maintaining a dwelling for drug purposes and 5) being a habitual felon. Hicks was initially present in court but subsequently absconded during jury selection. An order for his arrest was issued, and the court conducted the remainder of the trial in his absence. A jury found Hicks *guilty* of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and the lesser-included offense of misdemeanor possession of marijuana. The jury found him *not guilty* of possession with the intent to sell or deliver cocaine and maintaining a dwelling for drug purposes. Following the jury's verdict on the substantive charges, the jury then found Hicks *guilty* of being a habitual felon. He will be sentenced when he is located and taken into custody. Hicks' prior convictions include assault and battery with the intent to kill, burglary and grand larceny.

Diondre Montrez Bittle, 25, was tried for 1) felony breaking or entering, 2) conspiracy to commit felony breaking or entering, 3) larceny after breaking or entering and 4) being a habitual felon. A jury found Bittle *guilty* of felony breaking or entering and conspiracy to commit felony breaking or entering. The jury found him *not guilty* of larceny after breaking or entering. Upon the jury's verdict, Bittle denied his status as a habitual felon. The jury then found Bittle *guilty* of being a habitual felon. Bittle will be sentenced at a later date.

Geoffrey Lewis Womack, 57, was tried for 1) larceny of a motor vehicle, 2) felony possession of stolen goods, 3) two counts of misdemeanor larceny and 4) being a habitual felon. The jury found Womack *guilty* of two counts of misdemeanor larceny. When the jury was unable to reach unanimous verdicts on the remaining charges, Judge Ervin declared a mistrial as to those charges. As a result of the jury's verdicts, the habitual felon phase of the trial could not proceed. Judge Ervin sentenced Womack to 120 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail.

When called for trial, Daniel Ray Smith, 49, pled guilty to 1) robbery with a dangerous weapon and 2) being a habitual felon. Judge Ervin sentenced Smith to 96-128 months in prison. Smith's prior convictions include common law robbery, possession of cocaine and felony breaking or entering.

When called for trial, Martez Marcus Fuentes, 25, pled guilty to 1) assault with a deadly weapon with the intent to kill, 2) discharging a firearm into occupied property, 3) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and 4) being a habitual felon. Judge Ervin sentenced Fuentes to 55-78 months in prison. Fuentes' prior convictions include possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, felony possession of stolen goods and felony breaking or entering.

When called for trial, Jamelle Dominique James, 29, pled guilty to 1) being a habitual breaking or entering status offender, 2) felony breaking or entering, 3) larceny after breaking or entering and 4) conspiracy to commit felony breaking or entering. Judge Doughton sentenced James to 33-52 months in prison. James' prior convictions include felony larceny and multiple counts of felony breaking or entering.

When called for trial, Chauncey Dakota Hardrick, 53, pled guilty to 1) breaking or entering a motor vehicle and 2) being a habitual felon. Judge Ervin sentenced Hardrick to 30-48 months in prison. Hardrick's prior convictions include possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, common law robbery and breaking or entering a motor vehicle.

When called for trial, Edward Daver Davis, 39, pled guilty to 1) possession with the intent to sell or deliver heroin and 2) possession of heroin. Judge Levinson sentenced Davis to 12-24 months in prison.

Deronald Jaquay Bailey, 29, pled guilty to 1) two counts of possession of heroin and 2) being a habitual felon. He will be sentenced at a later date. Bailey's prior convictions include multiple counts of conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon and selling cocaine.

Another defendant filed a motion to suppress certain evidence utilized by law enforcement, alleging violations of his legal rights. Judge Levinson, who heard arguments from the defense and an Assistant District Attorney, granted the motion. The case remains pending.

*Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit [www.charmeckda.com](http://www.charmeckda.com). For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/charmeckda](http://www.facebook.com/charmeckda) and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.*

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