

NEWS RELEASE

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Heroin traffickers among 33 defendants convicted by Drug Team

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – During the week of February 12, 2018, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Drug Team convicted 33 defendants in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable W. Robert Bell, Superior Court Judge. The convictions were for crimes that included possessing, selling and trafficking in illegal drugs. Based on the structured sentencing laws in North Carolina, sentences ranged from probation to active prison sentences.

Among those convicted and sent to prison were:

Gregory Holmes, 25, pled guilty to 1) trafficking in heroin by transportation and 2) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Holmes was sentenced to 100-141 months in prison. These charges stemmed from two incidents that occurred in 2017. In the first incident, Holmes was arrested after police found him in possession of nearly \$2,500, heroin and a loaded pistol. Later, undercover Charlotte-Mecklenburg police arranged to purchase heroin from Holmes. Holmes arrived at the designated location, and when officers moved in to arrest him, Holmes ran from them. Holmes was arrested. Inside Holmes' vehicle, officers found 31 grams of heroin. In total, this investigation led to a seizure of more than 81 grams of heroin.

Charles Barnwell, 36, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by sale. Barnwell was sentenced to 90-120 months in prison. In May 2017, undercover Charlotte-Mecklenburg police arranged a deal with Barnwell to purchase heroin. Barnwell was arrested at the location designated for the deal, and police executed a search warrant of his residence. As a result of this case, more than 70 grams of heroin and \$2,700 were seized by Charlotte-Mecklenburg police.

Andre Pelletier, 26, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by transportation. Pelletier was sentenced to 70-93 months in prison. In February 2017, Pelletier was searched when he arrived at the office of his probation officer. The probation officer located a pill bottle that contained several drugs, including more than 7 grams of heroin.

Bradley Privatte, 26, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by sale. Privatte was sentenced to 70-93 months in prison.

Martin Sanchez, 31, pled guilty to 1) attempted trafficking in methamphetamine by possession and 2) attempted trafficking in methamphetamine by sale. Sanchez was sentenced to 40-66 months in prison.

Kenneth Bell, 52, pled guilty to 1) attempted trafficking in heroin by possession and 2) attempted trafficking in heroin by sale. Bell was sentenced to 34-60 months in prison.

Jordan Franks, 31, previously pled guilty to trafficking in cocaine by sale. Franks was sentenced to 42-63 months in prison.

Note: Almost all guilty pleas entered in criminal administrative court are the result of an agreed upon plea arrangement between the State and the defendant, which is then approved by the sentencing judge. For more information about why most cases must be resolved by plea negotiation instead of jury trial, please visit the "Understanding Criminal Court" section of the DA's website at www.charmeckda.com.

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