

# NEWS RELEASE

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## DA's Habitual Felon Team sends 19 defendants to prison

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Habitual Felon Team convicted 28 defendants during the week of February 24, 2014. The defendants entered their guilty pleas before The Honorable Richard D. Boner and The Honorable Jesse B. Caldwell, III, Superior Court Judges. Nineteen of the defendants were sent to prison; some were not habitual felons under North Carolina law.

Among those convicted and sent to prison were:

Adam Charles, 30, pled guilty to 1) breaking or entering, 2) larceny after breaking or entering and 3) being a habitual felon. Charles was sentenced to 72-99 months in prison.

Tomka McDowell, 45, pled guilty to 1) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, 2) manufacturing marijuana and 3) being a habitual felon. McDowell was sentenced to 40-60 months in prison. Some of McDowell's prior convictions include flee to elude arrest, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and larceny of a motor vehicle.

Pedro Espinoza, 22, pled guilty to 1) breaking or entering, 2) larceny after breaking or entering and 3) being a habitual breaking or entering status offender. Espinoza was sentenced to 36-56 months in prison. He was also sentenced to an additional 12-24 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending the successful completion of 36 months of supervised probation. Some of Espinoza's prior convictions include breaking or entering a motor vehicle, possession of a stolen motor vehicle and breaking or entering.

Charles Thrasher, 47, pled guilty to 1) possession of cocaine and 2) being a habitual felon. Thrasher was sentenced to 30-48 months in prison. Some of Thrasher's prior convictions include possession with intent to sell or deliver cocaine, selling cocaine and identity theft.

Adam Welch, 25, pled guilty to possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Welch was sentenced to 30-48 months in prison.

Akoma Hall, 42, pled guilty to 1) possession of cocaine and 2) being a habitual felon. Hall was sentenced to 30-48 months in prison. Some of Hall's prior convictions include breaking or entering, larceny after breaking or entering and common law robbery.

*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](http://www.charmeckda.com).*

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