

NEWS RELEASE

R. Andrew Murray
District Attorney

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Man who committed thefts at UNC Charlotte among 30 convicted of property crimes

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Thirty defendants pled guilty to property crimes in Mecklenburg County Superior Court during the week of March 14, 2016. The defendants, who were prosecuted by the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Crimes Against Property Team, entered their guilty pleas in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable Gregory R. Hayes, Superior Court Judge. The convictions were for crimes that included breaking or entering, possession of a stolen motor vehicle, obtaining property by false pretense and embezzlement. Among the defendants who pled guilty were:

Tabari Grant, 20, pled guilty to 1) three counts of felony breaking or entering, 2) three counts of larceny after breaking or entering and 3) resisting a public officer. He was sentenced to 16-38 months in prison. In August 2015, Grant entered a secured lab in the Energy Production and Infrastructure Center (EPIC) building on UNC Charlotte's campus and removed credit cards from a book bag. Video surveillance captured Grant picking up the book bag as if he were going to leave but then dropping the bag and running to a nearby elevator. The victim later learned that his credit cards had been used at Dick's Sporting Goods, Sam's Club and Velocity Sneaker Boutique. The next day, Grant entered Woodward Hall and the EPIC building on the UNC Charlotte campus and removed more book bags. Surveillance footage showed Grant entering Woodward Hall without a book bag and then exiting with a bag on his shoulder. Footage also showed him entering the EPIC building and removing another book bag, which contained credit cards that were later used at Sam's Club and Starbucks. Days later, Grant returned to UNC Charlotte and was recognized by an officer. The officer stopped to speak with Grant. When additional officers arrived, Grant attempted to flee on foot but was apprehended by police. Investigators obtained surveillance footage from Sam's Club that showed Grant using the victims' cards during transactions, and when interviewed by police, Grant admitted to entering Woodward Hall and the EPIC building and stealing the items.

Thomas Taylor, 68, pled guilty to nine counts of felony accessing a government computer. Taylor was sentenced to 16-29 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 60 months of supervised probation. As conditions of his probation, Taylor must serve 90 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail and pay \$75,000 in restitution.

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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