

NEWS RELEASE

R. Andrew Murray
District Attorney

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Cocaine, heroin traffickers among 43 convicted by DA's Drug Team

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – During the week of April 14, 2014, the District Attorney's Drug Team convicted 43 defendants in Mecklenburg County Superior Court. The defendants entered their guilty pleas in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable Linwood O. Foust, 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 the defendants who pled guilty and were sent to prison were:

Francisco Quintero-Felizardo, 53, pled guilty to trafficking in cocaine by sale. He was sentenced to 35-51 months in prison. In October 2013, Quintero-Felizardo sold 55 grams of cocaine to an undercover Charlotte-Mecklenburg police officer.

Thomas Jimenez-Gonzales, 23, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by possession. He was sentenced to 70-93 months in prison.

Jose Espinal, 24, pled guilty to trafficking in marijuana by transportation. He was sentenced to 25-39 months in prison.

Calvin Crawford, 38, pled guilty to two counts of sale or delivery of heroin within 1,000 feet of a school. Crawford was sentenced to 23-40 months in prison. He was also sentenced to an additional 23-40 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 36 months of supervised probation.

Hieng Chea, 30, pled guilty to 1) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and 2) misdemeanor possession of marijuana. Chea was sentenced to 15-27 months in prison. Chea also admitted violating his probation for a prior conviction, and his sentence in that case was activated.

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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