

NEWS RELEASE

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31 guilty pleas result in convictions of drug traffickers

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Over the course of a week, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Drug Team convicted 31 defendants of crimes such as trafficking in cocaine. The proceedings were held April 18-22, 2016, 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 the defendants sent to prison were:

Kalomo Ellis, 42, pled guilty to trafficking in cocaine by possession. Ellis was sentenced to 35-51 months in prison. In February 2015, Charlotte-Mecklenburg police executed a search warrant at Ellis' residence. Officers located 500.56 grams of cocaine, scales, grinders, baggies, large amounts of cash and a firearm.

Jaime Valenzuela-Pena, 34, pled guilty to conspiracy to traffic heroin by possession. Valenzuela-Pena was sentenced to 70-93 months in prison.

Norris Washington, 44, pled guilty to trafficking in cocaine by possession. Washington was sentenced to 35-51 months in prison.

Timothy Seegars, 35, pled guilty to attempted trafficking in heroin by possession. Seegars was sentenced to 13-25 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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