

NEWS RELEASE

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Heroin trafficker among 30 defendants convicted by Drug Team

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – A drug trafficker found with approximately 640 grams of heroin was among the 30 defendants recently convicted by the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Drug Team. During the week of May 8, 2017, the defendants entered their guilty pleas in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable W. Robert Bell and The Honorable Richard D. Boner, Superior Court Judges. 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 were convicted and sent to prison were:

Geovanny Hernandez, 21, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by transportation. Judge Bell sentenced Hernandez to 80-108 months in prison. In May 2016, Charlotte-Mecklenburg police, who had information that Hernandez was involved in distributing heroin in Charlotte, stopped a car Hernandez was driving. Hernandez gave the officers consent to search him and the car. Officers then located approximately 40 grams of heroin in Hernandez's pocket. Inside a backpack in the car was more than \$15,000 in cash. Hernandez also gave consent for detectives to search his hotel room. There, detectives found approximately 600 grams of heroin. Hernandez told investigators he sold large amounts of heroin in Charlotte and wired money to Mexico.

Nayode Stephen, 29, pled guilty to attempted trafficking in methamphetamine by possession. Judge Bell sentenced Stephen to 13-25 months in prison.

Derrick Wade, 35, pled guilty to 1) attempted trafficking in cocaine by transportation and 2) attempted trafficking in cocaine by possession. Judge Bell sentenced Wade to 10-21 months in prison.

Victor Graham, 30, pled guilty to misdemeanor possession of marijuana. Judge Bell sentenced Graham to 45 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail.

Kateria Flowers, 32, pled guilty to possession of drug paraphernalia. Judge Bell sentenced Flowers to 21 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail.

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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