

NEWS RELEASE

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Several heroin traffickers among 30 defendants convicted by Drug Team

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – During the week of July 18, 2016, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Drug Team convicted 30 defendants, including drug traffickers who were found with kilograms of heroin. The defendants entered their guilty pleas in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable Robert C. Ervin and The Honorable W. Erwin Spainhour, 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:

Marco Robles-Cruz, 31, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by possession. Judge Ervin sentenced Robles-Cruz to 90-120 months in prison. In October 2015, Charlotte-Mecklenburg police executed a search warrant on Robles-Cruz's residence after obtaining information that he and his associates were involved in trafficking heroin and observing behavior consistent with such activity. Detectives located more than 6 kilograms of heroin, and fingerprint analysis of the heroin's packaging identified Robles-Cruz's fingerprints.

Fermin Miramontes, 24, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by possession. Judge Spainhour sentenced Miramontes to 90-120 months in prison. In December 2015, Miramontes delivered 28 grams of heroin to undercover detectives with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department. The next day, Miramontes gave detectives consent to search his apartment. Detectives located approximately 2 kilograms of heroin.

Julian Benitez, 20, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by possession. Judge Ervin sentenced Benitez to 90-120 months in prison.

Chelsea Long, 21, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by possession. Judge Ervin sentenced Long to 70-93 months in prison.

David Richards, 34, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by possession. Judge Ervin sentenced Richards to 60-81 months in prison.

Francisco Jaramillo, 40, pled guilty to trafficking in cocaine by possession. Judge Ervin sentenced Jaramillo to 35-51 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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