

NEWS RELEASE

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August 17, 2018

27 defendants convicted by Drug Team; 14 graduate from treatment courts

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Beginning August 6, 2018, and ending August 8, 2018, the DA's Drug Prosecution Team convicted 27 defendants in Courtroom 5350 before The Honorable Karen Eady-Williams, 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.

While the team works to hold drug sellers and traffickers accountable for their crimes, prosecutors also connect defendants facing addictions with treatment services. Since July 13, 2018, a total of 51 defendants were referred to Mecklenburg County Recovery Courts, which work to break the cycle of addiction. One defendant was admitted to District STEP Recovery Court, two defendants were admitted to Superior STEP Recovery Court, three defendants were admitted to Wellness Court (formerly Mental Health Treatment Court), and three defendants were admitted to DWI Recovery Court. After successfully completing the program, 14 defendants graduated from the recovery courts during the quarterly graduation in July.

Among the defendants who pled guilty and were sent to prison were:

Matthew Allen, 45, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by sale. On January 31, 2017, detectives with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department contacted Allen to arrange an undercover deal for heroin. As a result of the investigation, officers seized over 26 grams of heroin. Judge Eady-Williams sentenced Allen to 70-93 months in prison.

Deveon Cooper, 23, pled guilty to sale of cocaine. On September 20, 2017, detectives with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department arranged an undercover purchase of cocaine from Cooper. The investigation led to a seizure of more than 24 grams of cocaine. Judge Eady-Williams sentenced Cooper to 12-24 months in prison.

Divee Cunningham, 21, pled guilty to sale of cocaine. Judge Eady-Williams sentenced Cunningham to 10-21 months in prison.

Christian Sullivan, 32, pled guilty to 1) attempted trafficking in marijuana by transport and 2) attempted trafficking in marijuana by possession. Judge Eady-Williams sentenced Sullivan to 6-17 months in prison. Judge Eady-Williams also sentenced Sullivan to an additional 6-17 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending Sullivan's successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation.

Lennie Dukes, 36, pled guilty to attempted trafficking in marijuana by transport. Judge Eady-Williams sentenced Dukes to 5-15 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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