

NEWS RELEASE

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February 6, 2020

Violent Crimes Team convicts 32 defendants

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Violent Crimes Team recently convicted 32 defendants of charges such as robbery with a dangerous weapon and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. The defendants entered guilty pleas January 21 -24, 2020, as well as on January 31, 2020. The proceedings were held before The Honorable Jesse B. Caldwell, III, and The Honorable R. Gregory Horne, Superior Court Judges.

Brian Smith, 18, pled guilty to robbery with a dangerous weapon. Judge Caldwell sentenced Smith to 59-83 months in prison. In August 2019, the victims were sitting in their vehicle on Mintworth Avenue in Charlotte when a car pulled up behind them, blocking in the victims. Four men exited the vehicle. Two of the men were armed, and one of them was later identified as Smith. The suspects then ordered the victims out of their car and robbed them of their cellphones. Smith pistol-whipped one victim in the face. Smith and another suspect then got into the victims' car and drove away. The victims' vehicle was found abandoned shortly thereafter. The victim later contacted detectives to tell them he had received an email about an Internet search conducted on his phone for a self-serve kiosk where cellphones can be sold. There had been a failed sale of the phones by Brian Smith, according to the kiosk company, and the machine took a photo of Smith during the attempted transaction. When police located Smith, he admitted to the crime. Police recovered a handgun matching the description of the one used during the robbery.

Dashawn Pope, 24, pled guilty to conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon. Judge Caldwell sentenced Pope to 28-46 months in prison.

Anthony Drayton, 19, pled guilty to robbery with a dangerous weapon. Judge Horne sentenced Drayton to 38-58 months in prison.

Demari Patterson, 29, pled guilty to 1) two counts of discharging a weapon into a moving vehicle and 2) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Judge Horne sentenced Patterson to 51-74 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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