

# NEWS RELEASE

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## DA's Habitual Felon Team sends 21 defendants to prison

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Habitual Felon Team convicted 24 defendants during the week of March 24, 2014, in Mecklenburg County Superior Court. The defendants entered their guilty pleas in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable Richard D. Boner, Superior Court Judge. Of the 24 defendants convicted, 21 were sent to prison; some were not habitual felons under North Carolina law.

Among those convicted were:

Vincent Leonard, 46, pled guilty to 1) felony larceny from the person, 2) possession of a stolen motor vehicle and 3) being a habitual felon. Leonard was sentenced to 77-105 months in prison. Some of Leonard's prior convictions include robbery with a dangerous weapon and breaking or entering.

Anthony Ford, 25, pled guilty to 1) attempted robbery with a dangerous weapon, 2) assault with a deadly weapon and 3) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Ford was sentenced to 58-72 months in prison. Some of Ford's prior convictions include sale of cocaine, possession of cocaine and common law robbery.

Brandon Hardin, 22, pled guilty to 1) breaking or entering and 2) being a habitual breaking or entering status offender. Hardin was sentenced to 44-65 months in prison. Hardin's prior convictions include common law robbery, breaking or entering and larceny after breaking or entering.

Jared Ellis, 24, pled guilty to 1) breaking or entering a motor vehicle and 2) being a habitual felon. Ellis was sentenced to 35-54 months in prison. Ellis' conviction history includes multiple counts of breaking or entering a motor vehicle.

Earl Smith, Jr., 43, pled guilty to 1) failure to report a new address as a sex offender. Smith was sentenced to 33-49 months in prison. Some of Smith's prior convictions include breaking or entering, indecent liberties with a child and second-degree sexual offense. Smith also has a prior conviction for failure to report a new address as a sex offender.

*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](http://www.charmeckda.com).*

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