

# NEWS RELEASE

**R. Andrew Murray**  
District Attorney

**September 12, 2017**

## **Drug trafficker sent to prison after discovery of 943 grams of heroin**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Heroin traffickers, including a man who had more than 900 grams of heroin at his home, were among the 27 defendants recently convicted by the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Drug Team. The defendants entered their guilty pleas September 5-8, 2017, in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable Carla N. Archie, 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. Court was not held on September 4, 2017, in observance of Labor Day.

Among those convicted and sent to prison were:

Cristhian Briones-Torres, 24, pled guilty to 1) trafficking in heroin by possession and 2) attempted trafficking in heroin by transportation. Briones-Torres was sentenced to 90-120 months in prison. In January 2017, Charlotte-Mecklenburg police observed Briones-Torres engaging in drug sales from his car. Detectives followed Briones-Torres and stopped his car following a drug sale. When detectives searched Briones-Torres, they found 22 bags containing more than 43 grams of heroin in his pants. He admitted to selling heroin and told detectives he had more at his home. Detectives discovered more than 900 grams of heroin at Briones-Torres' home.

Irvin Estrada-Quintero, 27, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by transportation. Estrada-Quintero was sentenced to 90-120 months in prison. In December 2016, Charlotte-Mecklenburg police saw Estrada-Quintero engage in a suspected drug sale. Officers stopped Estrada-Quintero's car and located more than 67 grams of heroin in the center console and \$1,453 in cash. Estrada-Quintero admitted to detectives that he had been selling heroin.

Maurice Drewitt, 33, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by sale. Drewitt was sentenced to 70-93 months in prison.

Alfredo Lopez-Leiva, 31, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by transportation. Lopez-Leiva was sentenced to 70-93 months in prison.

Jason Lavender, 37, pled guilty to 1) attempted trafficking in heroin by sale and 2) attempted trafficking in heroin by delivery. Lavender was sentenced to 42-70 months in prison.

Samuel Smith, 24, pled guilty to selling cocaine. Smith was sentenced to 13-25 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](http://www.charmeckda.com).*

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