

NEWS RELEASE

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2 convicted of selling cocaine; Recovery Courts celebrate graduates

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Two men who sold cocaine to undercover officers were among the 40 defendants recently convicted by the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Drug Team. The defendants entered their guilty pleas during the week of November 26, 2018, in courtroom 5310 before The Honorable Hugh B. Lewis, 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 Drug Team works to hold drug sellers and traffickers accountable for their crimes, prosecutors also connect defendants facing addictions with treatment services. Since October 17, 2018, a total of 31 defendants have been referred to Mecklenburg County Recovery Courts. Six were referred to District STEP Recovery Court, 11 were referred to Superior STEP Recovery Court, eight were referred to Wellness Court (formerly Mental Health Treatment Court), and six were referred to DWI Recovery Court.

In October and November, 11 people successfully graduated from Recovery Court programs. Five participants from DWI Recovery Court, two participants from Superior STEP Recovery Court, three participants from District STEP Recovery Court and one participant from Wellness Court were honored in graduation ceremonies.

Among the defendants who pled guilty were:

Waldemar Cruz, 37, pled guilty to sale of cocaine. Judge Lewis sentenced Cruz to 12-24 months in prison. Between August and October 2017, Charlotte-Mecklenburg police conducted five undercover purchases of cocaine from Cruz.

Oshay Isom, 25, pled guilty to 1) sale of cocaine, 2) possession with the intent to sell or deliver methamphetamine and 3) felony identity theft. Judge Lewis sentenced Isom to 12-24 months in prison. He was also sentenced to an additional 12-24 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. In June 2017, Isom sold cocaine to an undercover officer.

Kristen Allen, 29, pled guilty to possession of drug paraphernalia. Judge Lewis sentenced Allen to 40 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail.

Sam Polk, 31, pled guilty to possession of drug paraphernalia. Judge Lewis sentenced Polk to 120 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail.

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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