

NEWS RELEASE

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Violent Crimes Team convicts 2 at trial; 10 others plead guilty

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Over the course of a two-week trial session, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Violent Crimes Team tried four cases, with juries convicting two of the defendants, and convicted ten other defendants who entered guilty pleas.

The proceedings, which began October 30, 2023 and ended November 14, 2023, were held in courtrooms 5370, 5110, and 5130 before The Honorable Carla N. Archie, The Honorable Sally Kirby-Turner, The Honorable Hugh B. Lewis, and The Honorable Matt J. Osman. One case was heard in courtroom 5150 before The Honorable Reggie E. McKnight. Two cases were heard in courtroom 5110 on October 23, 2023 before The Honorable Daniel A. Kuehnert. Court was closed on Friday, November 10, 2023 in observance of Veterans Day.

Anthony Blackburn, 20, was tried for 1) robbery with a dangerous weapon and 2) conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon. After a six-day trial, the jury found him *guilty as charged*. Judge Lewis sentenced Blackburn to 64 to 89 months in prison. The evidence showed that at midnight on December 19, 2022, Blackburn and two other teenagers, all wearing ski masks, pulled the 66-year-old homeless victim from his car, where he was sleeping. Blackburn was armed with a hammer and one accomplice was armed with what the victim described as a handgun and what Blackburn told police was an empty BB gun that Blackburn had purchased. After striking the victim with the hammer while his accomplice pointed the gun at the victim, Blackburn and the other two teens stole the victim's car, taking with them all of the victim's worldly possessions.

Pierre Lewis, 37, was tried for possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. The jury found him *guilty as charged*. Judge Osman sentenced Lewis to 13 to 25 months in prison.

De'eric Blocker, 30, was tried in two separate trials during this trial session. In the first week, Blocker was tried for possession of a weapon by a prisoner. The jury found him *not guilty*. In the second week, Blocker was tried for 1) assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill, 2) discharging a firearm into an occupied vehicle in operation, and 3) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. After a week-long trial, a separate jury found him *not guilty*.

Bryan Barrera, 21, pled guilty to misdemeanor death by vehicle. Judge Osman sentenced Barrera to 60 days in jail; that sentence was suspended pending Barrera's successful

completion of 18 months of supervised probation. As conditions of his probation, Barrera must complete 350 hours of community service and must complete a 10-hour safe driving course.

Jy'lik Grier, 23, pled guilty to 1) nineteen counts of discharging a weapon into an occupied dwelling, 2) two counts of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill, and 3) two counts of conspiracy to commit discharging a weapon into an occupied dwelling. Judge Osman sentenced Grier to 51 to 74 months in prison.

Kamryn Kenty, 19, pled guilty to 1) discharging a firearm on educational property and 2) possession of a firearm on educational property. Judge Osman sentenced him to 10 to 21 months in prison.

Makenzie Harris, 23, pled guilty to 1) assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury and 2) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Judge McKnight sentenced Harris to 23-40 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending the defendant's successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. As a special condition of probation, the defendant was ordered to serve an active sentence of 230 days.

Maliek Randolph, 27, pled guilty to 1) three counts of discharging a weapon into occupied property and 2) assault with a deadly weapon. Judge Osman sentenced him to 46 to 80 months in prison.

Jaylen McCree, 20, pled guilty to assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury. Judge Osman sentenced McCree to 24-42 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending the defendant's successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. As a special condition of probation, McCree must serve an active sentence of 60 days.

Christian Guerrero, 25, pled guilty to accessory after the fact to discharging a weapon into an occupied vehicle in operation inflicting serious bodily injury. Judge Kuehnert sentenced the defendant to 20-36 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending the defendant's successful completion of 36 months of supervised probation and payment of \$23,000 restitution to the victim.

Joseph Gonzalez-Noyola, 24, pled guilty to 1) discharging a weapon into an occupied vehicle in operation inflicting serious bodily injury and 2) discharging a weapon into occupied property. Judge Kuehnert sentenced the defendant to 92-123 months in prison.

Tryshon Herron, 25, pled guilty to felony flee to elude arrest with a motor vehicle. Judge Kirby-Turner sentenced Herron to 8-19 months in prison.

Brian Cooke, 30, pled guilty to 1) common law robbery and 2) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Judge Kirby-Turner sentenced Cooke to 13-25 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending the defendant's successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation.

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