

NEWS RELEASE

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Heroin traffickers among 39 defendants convicted of drug crimes

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Over the course of a week, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Drug Team convicted 39 defendants, including heroin traffickers. The defendants entered their guilty pleas April 20-24, 2015, in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable Linwood O. Foust, 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.

Among the defendants who pled guilty and were sent to prison were:

Ryan Honigman, 35, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by transportation. Honigman was sentenced to 70-93 months in prison. In July 2014, Charlotte-Mecklenburg police officers saw Honigman engage in a drug transaction. Officers who stopped Honigman found more than 4 grams of heroin in his possession. He later confessed that he intended to sell the heroin.

Darwin Santos, 35, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by possession. Santos was sentenced to 58-82 months in prison.

Evan Lalka, 25, pled guilty to trafficking in heroin by possession. Lalka was sentenced to 45-66 months in prison.

Miguel Tavares-Rodriguez, 23, pled guilty to 1) attempted trafficking in heroin by transportation and 2) attempted trafficking in heroin by possession. Tavares-Rodriguez was sentenced to a total of 26-50 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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