

# NEWS RELEASE

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District Attorney

**July 31, 2012**

## **Property Team convicts 29 defendants, sends sex offender to prison**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Twenty-nine defendants pled guilty to property crimes in Mecklenburg County Superior Court from Monday, July 16 through Thursday, July 19, 2012. The defendants entered their pleas in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable James W. Morgan, Superior Court Judge. The convictions were for crimes that included felony breaking or entering, habitual felony breaking or entering, felony larceny, breaking or entering a motor vehicle and failure to register as a sex offender. Based on the structured sentencing laws in North Carolina, sentences ranged from probation to Malik Richards's active sentence of 29-47 months for 1) four counts of felony breaking or entering and 2) habitual felony breaking or entering.

Malik Richards, 22, pled guilty to four counts of felony breaking or entering . Richards also admitted to being a habitual breaking or entering status offender, having been convicted of felony breaking or entering in July, 2011. Judge Morgan sentenced him to 29-47 months in prison.

Damien Dawston, 19, pled guilty to 1) felony breaking or entering and 2) felony larceny after breaking or entering. He also admitted to being a habitual breaking or entering status offender, having been convicted of felony breaking or entering in October, 2011. Dawston was sentenced to 24-41 months in prison.

Brandon Givens, 27, pled guilty to failure to register as a sex offender. Judge Morgan sentenced him to 20-24 months in prison. In January, 2007, Givens was convicted of two counts of indecent liberties with a child.

Richard Higgins, 50, pled guilty to three counts of felony possession of stolen goods. Judge Morgan sentenced him to a total of 20-42 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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