

New Bern Heroin And Marijuana Drug Trafficking Ring Members Sentenced To Federal Prison

By Administrator
Thursday, 20 December 2018 09:51 -

United States Attorney Robert J. Higdon, Jr. announced that over the course of the last week in federal court, before Chief United States District

Judge Terrence W. Boyle, multiple defendants have been sentenced in a large-scale heroin and marijuana trafficking organization.

The investigation was part of OCDETF Operation 190, which was named in memory of New Bern Police Department Officer Alexander Thalmann. Officer Thalmann was shot and killed in the line of duty in March of 2014 by associates of the defendants in this case. An Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) is a joint federal, state, and local cooperative approach to combat drug trafficking and is the nation's primary tool for disrupting and dismantling major drug trafficking organizations, targeting national and regional level drug trafficking organizations, and coordinating the necessary law enforcement entities and resources to disrupt or dismantle the targeted criminal organization and seize their assets.

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The defendants' convictions and sentencings were the culmination of a multiyear investigation into a heroin trafficking ring operating in and around New Bern, North Carolina, and led primarily by two men: DAMIEN LAMONTE BROWN and CALVIN MARK WILSON. Agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) and members of the New Bern Police Department learned that BROWN, WILSON, and others had been involved in ordering heroin from New York City and arranging it to be brought down in multi-kilogram amounts over a period of several years. BROWN and WILSON then supplied various mid and lower-level dealers in and around New Bern with the heroin for sale.

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As part of the investigation, law enforcement conducted over twenty controlled purchases of heroin from organization members between November 2016 and July 2017, along with traffic stops and other encounters in which they confirmed that members possessed drugs and guns. Based on that investigation, ATF then obtained authorization for a federal wiretap of cellular phones associated with WILSON and two co-defendants. As a result, agents intercepted calls and texts over a three-month period in late 2017 showing that WILSON was directing the supply and distribution of kilogram-levels of heroin from New York to New Bern, NC. Based on intercepted calls, agents were able to stop and arrest WILSON and two co-defendants traveling back from New York with 3lbs of marijuana and 7 bars of heroin cutting agent.

ATF made arrests of many of the defendants on October 24, 2017, along with searches of five residences associated with the organization. Through the life of the

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investigation, law enforcement has seized over a kilogram of heroin and twenty firearms.

The defendants include:

□ DAMIEN LAMONTE BROWN, aka "Dame," 36, of New Bern, NC.

BROWN was convicted in August 2018 by a federal jury of conspiring to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute one hundred (100) grams or more of heroin, possession with intent to distribute one hundred (100) grams or more of heroin, and possession of a firearm by felon. BROWN was sentenced to 360 months' imprisonment.

□ DERRICK LAMONT DAVIS, aka "Gucci," 35, of Kinston, NC. DAVIS

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was convicted of conspiring to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute one hundred (100) grams or more of heroin. DAVIS was sentenced to 48 months' imprisonment.

□ DWAYNE LEE STALLINGS, aka "Smiley," 35, of Cove City, NC.

STALLINGS was convicted of possession of a firearm by a felon and was sentenced to 108 months' imprisonment.

□ NASSAR TURE MACK, 37, of New Bern, NC. MACK was convicted of possession of a firearm by felon and was sentenced to 24 months' imprisonment.

□ MARIO CORRELLUS BARGNEARE, aka "Rio," 39, of New Bern, NC. BARGNEARE was convicted of conspiring to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute one hundred (100) grams or more of heroin and discharging a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. BARGNEARE was sentenced to 204 months' imprisonment.

□ DEREK JACQUAN WIGGINS, aka "DJ," 38, of New Bern, NC. WIGGINS was convicted of conspiring to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute a quantity of heroin, several counts of distributing heroin, and possession of a firearm by a felon. He was sentenced to 120 months' imprisonment.

□ ROY JAMES NOLON, aka "Henny," 21, of New Bern, NC. NOLON was convicted of conspiring to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute a quantity of heroin and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. He was sentenced to 96

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months' imprisonment.

□ MICHAEL QUALEEK VELASQUEZ, aka "Moo Moo," 23, of New Bern, NC. VELASQUEZ was convicted of conspiring to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute a quantity of heroin and possession with intent to distribute a quantity of heroin. He was sentenced to 96 months' imprisonment.

□ LAMAR HOSEA WIGGINS, aka "LB," 39, of New Bern, NC.

WIGGINS was convicted of conspiring to possess with the intent to

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distribute a quantity of heroin and possession of a firearm by a felon.

He was sentenced to 96 months' imprisonment.

□ LASHAWNNA JAQUETTE MCCOTTER, aka "Flossy," 47, of New

Bern, NC. McCOTTER was convicted of conspiring to possess with the

intent to distribute a quantity of heroin and possession with intent to

distribute a quantity of marijuana. She was sentenced to 30 months'

imprisonment.

□ LATREKA DENISE HARDESTY, aka "T," 27, of New Bern, NC.

HARDESTY was convicted of conspiring to distribute and possess with

the intent to distribute a quantity of heroin. She was sentenced to time

served.

□ ADRIENNE MICHELLE HALL, 35, of New Bern, NC. HALL was

convicted of conspiring to distribute and possess with the intent to

distribute a quantity of heroin. She was sentenced to time served.

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□ CAROLINE LOUISE HUGHES, 28, of Alliance, NC. HUGHES was convicted of conspiring to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute a quantity of heroin. She was sentenced to 5 years probation.

Three defendants are scheduled to be sentenced over the course of the next few months. They are:

□ CALVIN MARK WILSON, aka "Bali," 34, of New Bern, NC. WILSON was convicted of conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute one thousand grams or more of heroin and a quantity of marijuana and possession with intent to distribute a quantity of marijuana. WILSON faces a sentence of not less than 20 years' imprisonment.

□ WILLIE FRANK JAMES AHERN, aka "White, White Bread, Dribs," 39, of Bayboro, NC. AHERN was convicted of conspiring to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute a quantity of heroin and several instances of distributing quantities of heroin. AHERN faces up to life imprisonment.

□ WALTER NAJEE GREEN, III, 21, of New Bern, NC. GREEN was convicted of distribution of a quantity of heroin and faces up to 30 years' imprisonment.

The investigation also led to 8 individuals being charged by the state for drug offenses. Those charges remain pending.

The investigation of this case was conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,

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Firearms & Explosives (ATF), New Bern Police Department, Jacksonville Police

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Department, Craven County Sheriff's Office, Pamlico County Sheriff's Office, the

North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, Onslow County Sheriff's Office,

Sampson County Sheriff's Office, Trent Woods Police Department, Carteret County

Sheriff's Office, Morehead City Police Department, Beaufort County Sheriff's Office,

and with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Drug

Enforcement Administration (DEA). Assistant United States Attorney Laura S.

Howard prosecuted this case on behalf of the government.