

Tabor City Man Sentenced To 14 Years For Drug Dealing And Money Laundering

By Administrator

Friday, 15 February 2019 10:17 - Last Updated Friday, 15 February 2019 10:21

Senior United States District Judge Malcolm J. Howard sentenced Justin Lee Myers, 34, of Tabor City, North Carolina, to 168 months in prison, followed by four years of supervised release. MYERS was charged as part of a 22-count Indictment filed on November 19, 2017 naming 8 defendants. On February 5, 2018, Myers pled guilty to Conspiracy to Distribute and Possess with Intent to Distribute Cocaine Base (Crack), Heroin, Fentanyl, and Marijuana, and to Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering. Beginning in December 2008, Columbus County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) in Tabor City, North Carolina, responded to calls involving the Myers Drug Trafficking Organization (DTO) regarding various criminal and drug related activity in an area known as the "Sandpit." The Sandpit consisted of approximately 25 mobile homes reachable after passing through a manned checkpoint. Investigation determined that the checkpoint was established as a lookout for law enforcement, and to protect the area from rival drug dealers. The checkpoint was normally manned by one to two armed members of the DTO.

Wire intercepts, confidential informants (CIs), and surveillance confirmed that the Myers DTO primarily operated in Columbus County. From February 2017 to May 2017, CIs were utilized to conduct a series of controlled purchases from members of the DTO. Witness statements and subsequent wire intercepts, which spanned from May 2, 2017, to June 8, 2017, determined that MYERS supplied the heroin, cocaine, crack, and marijuana, in addition to directing his co-conspirators. Furthermore, the wire intercepts revealed that MYERS and others had attempted to launder the proceeds of their drug trafficking.

Myers purchased a 2014 Corvette from Everett Chevrolet in Hickory, North Carolina, for \$67,634, a 2014 Porsche from Island Chrysler in Pawley's Island,

South Carolina, for \$77,983 and several other vehicles claiming his income as legitimate as the owner/operator of Monte Cutz Barber Shop.

This prosecution is part of an extensive investigation by the United States Attorney's Office's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF). 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.

That effort has been implemented through the Take Back North Carolina Initiative of The United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina. This initiative emphasizes the regional assignment of federal prosecutors to work with law enforcement and District Attorney's Offices on a sustained basis in those communities to reduce the violent crime rate, drug trafficking, and crimes against law enforcement.

This case was investigated by the Columbus County Sheriff's Office, the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, and the Wilmington Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Bradford Knott.