

Drug Convictions Earn Wilmington Gang Member 10-Year Federal Prison Sentence

By Administrator

Wednesday, 02 October 2019 08:18 -

Chief United States District Judge Terrence W. Boyle sentenced Taveon Nixon, 21, of Wilmington, North Carolina to 120 months imprisonment, followed by 3 years of supervised release. On December 20, 2018, a Grand Jury sitting in the Eastern District of North Carolina returned a four-count indictment, charging Nixon with three counts of distribution of heroin and one count of possession with intent to distribute a quantity of heroin and quantity of cocaine base (crack). On May 20, 2019, Nixon pled guilty to distribution of a quantity of heroin and possession with intent to distribute a quantity of heroin and a quantity of cocaine base (crack). According to the investigation, on November 29 and December 4, 2018, the Wilmington Police Department made two controlled purchases of heroin from Nixon in the area of South 9th Street in Wilmington. On December 10, 2018, officers with the Security Threat Unit of the North Carolina Department of Public Safety conducted a warrantless probationary search at the NIXON's residence in Wilmington. NIXON was on probation for possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Law enforcement found heroin, crack cocaine, and \$1,400 cash. NIXON was arrested as a result. Following this arrest, NIXON removed an ankle monitor in an attempt to evade law enforcement. According to law enforcement, NIXON was a validated gang member.

On January 17, 2019, NIXON had an outstanding federal arrest warrant. Law enforcement received information that NIXON was the passenger in a car with other gang members. Task Force Officers of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and members of the New Hanover County Sheriff's Office attempted to make a traffic stop at a gas station in New Hanover County. The driver struck a law enforcement car, while NIXON fled on foot. NIXON was arrested following a foot chase. Law enforcement found more than 250 bindles of heroin in the car and United States Currency. The driver and another passenger are scheduled to be sentenced in federal court later this month.

This case is part of an FBI-led Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) operation named "Dodge Ball." This operation is focused on members of the Nine Trey sect of the United Blood Nation, a violent gang in Wilmington, North Carolina involved in the distribution of heroin, possession of firearms and associated violence. This is a joint investigation by the FBI Safe Streets Task Force (Gang Unit), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Wilmington Police Department, and New Hanover Sheriff's Office. The FBI Safe Streets Task Force and ATF utilize resources from federal, state, and local law enforcement in order to efficiently and effectively target and combat criminal gangs and drug trafficking organizations operating in coastal southern North Carolina. A key component of federal task force's success involves the use of task force officers from local law enforcement who have direct knowledge of the criminal gang activity in their areas.

This case is also part of 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

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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.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation Safe Streets Task Force, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, New Hanover County Sheriff's Office, Wilmington Police Department, and North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation investigated this case. Assistant United States Attorney Timothy Severo prosecuted the case on behalf of the government.

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