

Drug Conviction Gets Elizabeth City Man 10 Year Federal Sentence

By Administrator
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Christopher Neil McLean, age 47, of Elizabethtown, North Carolina was sentenced April 19, 2021 in Federal District Court in Raleigh. McLean was sentenced to 120 months in federal prison on three counts of an indictment charging: conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine; possession with intent to distribute fifty (50) grams or more of a mixture and substance containing methamphetamine and aiding and abetting; and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

According to court documents, over the weekend of May 30, 2020, Paige Anderson, previously sentenced to 72 months in federal prison, and McLean would travel to Sanford, NC to pick up a large amount of methamphetamine and return the methamphetamine to Bladen County for distribution. On June 1, 2020, law enforcement officers conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle by McLean and Paige Anderson was the passenger. Law enforcement observed McLean leaning towards the center console of the vehicle. Officers were unable to see McLean's hands upon approach and commanded that McLean show his hands. A K-9 was deployed after McLean and Paige Anderson were secured and the vehicle searched. During the search of the vehicle, law enforcement found approximately 90 grams of methamphetamine, plastic baggies, glass pipes, digital scales, a firearm and \$1,189. Law enforcement officers found the firearm and holster in the center console area of the car. Following the stop, McLean provided an unprotected statement indicating that he had a lot of methamphetamine in his car.

G. Norman Acker III, Acting U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina made the announcement after sentencing by U.S. District Judge James C. Dever III. The Bladen County Sheriff's Office and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) investigated the case and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Murphy Averitt prosecuted the case.

This case is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) operation and 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.