



Department of Justice

**United States Attorney Anne M. Tompkins
Western District of North Carolina**

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CONTACT: Lia Bantavani
704-338-3140
lia.bantavani@usdoj.gov

**CATAWBA COUNTY ROUND-UP NETS 19 ON FEDERAL
DRUG AND GUN VIOLATIONS**

Nine Suspects also Arrested on State Charges

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Federal and local law enforcement agencies arrested 19 suspects today in Hickory, N.C. and the surrounding area charged with drug trafficking, illegal firearm possession and other federal offenses, announced Anne M. Tompkins, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina. Another nine individuals were arrested on state charges.

U.S. Attorney Tompkins is joined in making today's announcement by Wayne L. Dixie, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Charlotte Field Division, Chief Tom Adkins of the Hickory Police Department (HPD); and James C. Gaither, Jr., District Attorney for Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties.

The federal indictments were returned by a grand jury on October 15 and 16, 2013, but remained sealed until today's arrests. The investigation began in October 2012, targeting individuals who participated in illegal drug transactions and gun trafficking in and around Hickory. The seven-month anti-violence initiative resulted in the seizure of more than 80 firearms, including 53 handguns, 19 rifles, 10 shotguns and one short barrel shotgun. Law enforcement also seized more than 1,425 grams of narcotics, including over 1,125 grams of cocaine and more than 230 grams of marijuana, with a total street value of over \$55,000.

In making today's announcement U.S. Attorney Tompkins stated, "This morning's arrest of 19 offenders is part of my office's ongoing effort to combat drug trafficking and gun violence throughout our district. The law enforcement partners who participated in this anti-violence initiative share a common goal: to fight and reduce violent drug crime by joining forces, so our citizens can reclaim their neighborhoods from drug dealers and put an end to the collateral violence that comes with drug and gun trafficking."

"ATF will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to identify those individuals that contribute to the number of crime guns used in violent crime in the Hickory area. Violent gun crime is the scourge in our society and any contribution to illegal firearms trafficking cannot stand," said ATF Special Agent in Charge Wayne L. Dixie. "Our mandate is to

do everything we lawfully can to allow the citizens of Hickory to live in a safe and secure environment without the fear of having needless violent crime as a part of their lives. We accept that mandate and today's law enforcement action should send that message loud and clear."

"I am very proud of our local law-enforcement and agents and staff of the ATF who worked together to bring about this initiative. This is a major commitment of resources from the ATF for a city the size Hickory. These defendants will be prosecuted by both the U.S. Attorney's office and the 25th prosecutorial district. We intend to follow up on this excellent collaborative effort with aggressive prosecution," said James C. Gaither, Jr., District Attorney for the 25th Prosecutorial District, which encompasses Burke, Caldwell and Catawba counties.

"Hickory Police Department is committed to making our community safe," said Chief of Police Tom Adkins. "HPD along with other area jurisdictions are members of the Catawba County Safe Communities Initiative, which directs law enforcement resources to reducing the violence and drugs in our communities. This focused investigation with ATF and our officers will have a lasting impact on reducing violence and taking drugs off the streets of Hickory and other communities in Catawba County."

The round-up was conducted by the ATF, U.S. Marshals Service, Hickory Police Department, Newton Police Department, Catawba County Sheriff's Office, Conover Police Department, and Longview Police Department. Those arrested include drug traffickers, members and associates of drug trafficking organizations, convicted felons, as well as several local gang members. The federal suspects arrested during the round-up were:

- Kadeem Jamal Albright, 21, address unknown.
- Marquice Tyrone Streeter, 25, of Hickory.
- Kianta Martese Davis, 21, of Conover, N.C.
- Keon Maurquie Gaither, 25, address unknown.
- Chaetez Sean Clayton, 23, of Hickory.
- Tyree Dorian Rhinehardt, 21, of Hickory.
- Isreal Lerock Linebarger, 22, of Conover.
- Larry Jermaine Linebarger, 26, address unknown.
- Larry Elwood Steptoe, 33, address unknown.
- Jeffrey Lashaw Maddox 27, address unknown.
- Anthony Roger Mull, 28, of Hickory.
- Kenneth Demond Norman, 35, of Hickory.
- Eric Jay Ramirez, 33, of Hickory.
- Cortez Lamar Rogers, 31, address unknown.
- Dorrian Debrell Shuford, 20, of Newton, N.C.
- Traquon Rashaad Davis, 20, of Conover.
- Brandon Jaqwan Sifford, 22, of Hickory.
- Anthony Lamar Mason, 24, of Hickory.
- Donnell Lavon Thomas, 39, of Hickory.

(See chart below for a breakdown of federal charges and penalties for each defendant)

Nine additional defendants currently in state custody on state violations have been charged with federal offenses in connection with this investigation, bringing the total number of those charged federally to 28. They are:

- Damion Jordan Armstrong, 22, address unknown.
- Xavier Ahmad Cade, 22, of Hickory.
- Brandon Colbert, 26, of Hickory.
- Kerston Deshawn Edwards, 24, of Lincolnton, N.C.
- William Shalon Linebarger, 27, address unknown.
- Kenteze Rayvon Martin, 23, of Shelby, N.C.
- Christopher Durand Myers, 34, address unknown.
- Donald Lavar Ramseur, 24, of Hickory.
- Paris Michael Thompson, 24, address unknown.

Another nine defendants arrested this morning face state criminal charges.

The federal defendants arrested today are currently in federal custody. Their initial appearances were held in U.S. District Court before U.S. Magistrate Judge David C. Keesler.

The charges contained in the indictments are allegations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

The investigation is being conducted by the ATF and Hickory PD. U.S. Attorney Tompkins thanked all the law enforcement agencies involved in today’s round-up for their assistance in making today’s arrests.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer Dillon of the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Charlotte is leading the prosecution.

Federal Defendant	Federal Charge	Potential Penalty
Kadeem Jamal Albright 5:18CR88	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
	Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
Marquice Tyrone Streeter 5:18CR88	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
	Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine

		fine
Damion Jordan Armstrong 5:13CR96	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine Possession of a firearm by a convicted felon	Maximum of life imprisonment and \$10,000,000 fine Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine Maximum of 10 years imprisonment and \$250,000 fine
Kianta Martese Davis 5:13CR87 5:13CR96	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of life imprisonment and \$10,000,000 fine Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine
Keon Maurquie Gaither 5:13CR96	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of life imprisonment and \$10,000,000 fine Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
Paris Michael Thompson 5:13CR96	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of life imprisonment and \$10,000,000 fine Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
Xavier Ahmad Cade 5:13CR91	Possession of a firearm by a convicted felon	Maximum of 10 years imprisonment and \$250,000 fine
Chaetez Sean Clayton 5:13CR82	Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine
Brandon Colbert	Possession with intent to distribute	Maximum of 40 years

5:13CR99	crack cocaine	imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine
Tyree Dorian Rhinehardt 5:13CR99	Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
Kenteze Rayvon Martin 5:13CR87	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
	Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
Kerston Deshawn Edwards 5:13CR84	Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine
Isreal Lerock Linebarger 5:13CR83	Dealing in firearms without a license	Maximum of 5 years imprisonment and \$250,000 fine
Larry Jermaine Linebarger 5:13CR94	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
	Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
Larry Elwood Steptoe 5:13CR94	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
	Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
William Shalon Linebarger 5:13CR86	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine
	Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine	Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine

<p>Jeffrey Lashaw Maddox 5:13CR86</p>	<p>Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p> <p>Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p>	<p>Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine</p> <p>Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine</p>
<p>Anthony Roger Mull 5:13CR98</p>	<p>Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p> <p>Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p> <p>Possession of a firearm by a convicted felon</p>	<p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p> <p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p> <p>Maximum of 10 years imprisonment and \$250,000 fine</p>
<p>Donald Lavar Ramseur 5:13CR98</p>	<p>Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p> <p>Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p>	<p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p> <p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p>
<p>Christopher Durand Myers 5:13CR92</p>	<p>Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p> <p>Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p>	<p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p> <p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p>
<p>Kenneth Demond Norman 5:13CR90</p>	<p>Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p>	<p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p>
<p>Eric Jay Ramirez 5:13CR81</p>	<p>Possession of a firearm by a convicted felon</p>	<p>Maximum of 10 years imprisonment and \$250,000 fine</p>
<p>Cortez Lamar Rogers 5:13CR89</p>	<p>Possession of a firearm by a convicted felon</p>	<p>Maximum of 10 years imprisonment and \$250,000 fine</p>

<p>Dorrian Debrell Shuford 5:13CR93</p>	<p>Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p> <p>Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p>	<p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p> <p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p>
<p>Traquon Rashaad Davis 5:13CR93</p>	<p>Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p> <p>Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p> <p>Possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime</p>	<p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p> <p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p> <p>Mandatory minimum of 5 years imprisonment and a maximum of life imprisonment to run consecutive to any other count</p>
<p>Brandon Jaqwan Sifford 5:13CR97</p>	<p>Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p> <p>Possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime</p>	<p>Maximum of 40 years imprisonment and \$5,000,000 fine</p> <p>Mandatory minimum of 5 years imprisonment and a maximum of life imprisonment to run consecutive to any other count</p>
<p>Anthony Lamar Mason 5:13CR97</p>	<p>Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine</p>	<p>Maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine</p>
<p>Donnell Lavon Thomas 5:12CR85</p>	<p>Possession of a firearm by a convicted felon</p>	<p>Maximum of 10 years imprisonment and \$250,000 fine</p>

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