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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown Announces Completion of Prison Contraband Investigation at Jessup Correctional Institution *All Eleven Defendants Convicted for Roles in Contraband Scheme at JCI*

BALTIMORE, MD (September 1, 2023) – Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today announced that all eleven defendants who were [indicted](#) in March 2023 for a prison contraband conspiracy operating at Jessup Correctional Institution (JCI) in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, have pleaded guilty to their roles in the conspiracy. The investigation was led by the Maryland Office of the Attorney General’s Organized Crime Unit, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), and the Anne Arundel County Police Department.

In April 2021, the DPSCS Intelligence and Investigative Division began an investigation after discovering heroin, suboxone, an Apple Watch, and data storage cards in the JCI cell of inmates Gary Ward and Donte Tyner. Working with the Attorney General’s Office and the Anne Arundel County Police Department, the investigative team uncovered a complex contraband conspiracy operating to smuggle drugs and other contraband into JCI.

As alleged in the indictments, the investigation identified Makeia Brockington Nelson, a nurse contractor who worked in JCI’s medical unit, as the person smuggling the drugs and other contraband into JCI. On March 30, 2022, law enforcement intercepted a package of contraband that Nelson intended to smuggle into JCI, which included suboxone, marijuana, tobacco, and SIM cards. The investigation revealed that Nelson had received that package from Jasmine Ward, the daughter of JCI inmate Gary Ward. A search warrant of Nelson’s house uncovered additional suboxone and tobacco that she intended to smuggle into JCI, at which time Nelson was barred from all DPSCS facilities. After the interception of the package, financial records from Cash App identified the involvement of a network of outside facilitators who sent and received money to pay for the drugs and contraband and the smuggling fees that Nelson charged.. The records showed that, from January 2021 through March 2022, Nelson received at least \$92,253 in smuggling fees from the outside facilitators on behalf of current and former JCI inmates.

On April 12, 2023, Attorney General Brown announced the indictments.

All eleven defendants have now pleaded guilty before the Honorable Judge Mark W. Crooks of the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County:

On July 7, 2023, Leo Gonzalez, 29, a DOC inmate, pleaded guilty to possession of a telecommunications device in a place of confinement. Gonzalez was sentenced to six months of incarceration, consecutive to the sentence he is presently serving.

On July 7, 2023, Kyvelle Martin, 39, a DOC inmate, pleaded guilty to possession of a telecommunications device in a place of confinement. Martin was sentenced to six months of incarceration, consecutive to the sentence he is presently serving.

On July 7, 2023, Tavon Owens, 30, a DOC inmate, pleaded guilty to possession of a telecommunications device in a place of confinement. Owens was sentenced to six months of incarceration, consecutive to the sentence he is presently serving.

On July 7, 2023, Marlon Clanton, 40, of Parkville, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to deliver contraband. Marlon Clanton was sentenced to three years, suspending all but time served, with three years of supervised probation.

On July 7, 2023, Vaughn Clanton, 49, of Parkville, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to deliver contraband. Vaughn Clanton was sentenced to three years, suspending all but time served, with three years of supervised probation.

On July 21, 2023, Gary Ward, Jr., 52, a DOC inmate, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to deliver contraband and felony possession with intent to distribute heroin. Gary Ward was sentenced to three years of incarceration, consecutive to the sentence he is presently serving.

On July 21, 2023, Jasmine Ward, 30, of Baltimore, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to deliver contraband. Jasmine Ward was sentenced to three years, suspending all but 45 days of active incarceration. Upon her release from incarceration, she will be on five years of probation.

On July 21, 2023, Donte Tyner, 37, a DOC inmate, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to deliver contraband. Tyner was sentenced to two years of incarceration, consecutive to the sentence he is presently serving.

On August 17, 2023, Tamar Brown, 24, of Hunt Valley, the daughter of Makeia Nelson, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to deliver contraband. Tamar Brown was sentenced to three years, all suspended with five years of probation.

On August 18, 2023, Makeia Nelson, who also goes by Makeia Brown and Makeia Brockington, 47, of Hunt Valley, the former nurse contractor, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to deliver contraband and felony possession with intent to distribute Buprenorphine. Nelson was sentenced to six years, suspending all but six months of active incarceration. Upon her release from incarceration, she will be on five years of probation.

On August 18, 2023, Rodney Brown, 55, a DOC inmate, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to deliver contraband. Rodney Brown was sentenced to six months of incarceration, consecutive to the sentence he is presently serving.

In making today's announcement, Attorney General Brown thanked Criminal Division Chief Katie Dorian, DPSCS Detective Sergeant Michael Baier, Anne Arundel County Police Department Detective Erick Patterson, and Senior Assistant Attorneys General Jared I. Albert and Zachary A. Norfolk who prosecuted this case.

Attorney General Brown also thanked the State's Attorney for Anne Arundel County Anne Colt Leitess for her assistance in this investigation.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2023/090123.pdf>