



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth - Police Department

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DATE: 10/3/2018
SUBJECT: 1st Degree Sale of a Controlled Substance Sentencing
BY: Ingrid Hornibrook

NATURE OF INCIDENT:
CASE NO.:
INCIDENT DATE:
INCIDENT TIME:
INCIDENT LOCATION:

On October 1st, 2018, Samuel James Nelson, 28, of Duluth, was sentenced in St. Louis County District Court to 90 months imprisonment with the Minnesota Department of Corrections after he plead guilty to Aid and Abet 1st Degree Sale of a Controlled Substance. Nelson was charged as a result of Operation #Hboyz, a nearly yearlong multi-jurisdictional investigation into heroin being sold in the Twin Ports area. Investigators learned that heroin was being transported from Chicago to Apple Valley, where it was then transported to Duluth, Superior, Cloquet and other locations in St. Louis and Carlton Counties for sale. 12 individuals were charged in Federal Court with their involvement in the conspiracy and an additional 17 were charged in State Court. Nelson was one of several co-conspirators working in the Duluth area to sell heroin that were charged in State Court. The investigation involved members of the Lake Superior Drug and Violent Crime Task Force, Duluth Police, Superior Police, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office, Carlton County Sheriff's Office, Hibbing Police, Virginia Police, Fond du Lac Police, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

Samuel Nelson is well known to Duluth Police and has victimized citizens in the Twin Ports for several years. In addition to his latest drug conviction, Nelson has convictions in Minnesota for Fleeing a Peace Officer in a Motor Vehicle (2016), Offering a Forged Check (2016), Identity Theft (2016), Tampering with a Motor Vehicle (2015), Theft (2014), Obstructing the Legal Process (2014), Theft (2014), Possession of Shoplifting Gear (2014), Theft (2014), Receiving Stolen Property (2013), False Name to a Peace Officer (2013) and 4th Degree Burglary (2011). Nelson also has pending criminal court cases in St. Louis, Carlton, Hennepin and Anoka Counties for Receiving Stolen Property, Theft, Shoplifting, 4th Degree Criminal Damage to Property, Tampering with a Motor Vehicle and Fleeing Police on Foot.

At the time of Nelson's arrest in the Operation #Hboyz case, he was on probation in St. Louis County for his convictions for two counts of Fleeing Police in a Motor Vehicle in 2016. During that incident, police attempted to arrest Nelson for an outstanding arrest warrant while Nelson was at a gas station in the Duluth Heights neighborhood. Nelson fled from police in his motor vehicle during the attempted arrest, striking police vehicles and a pedestrian who was standing outside their vehicle. Nelson was later arrested at a residence in the Lincoln Park neighborhood after jumping out a second story window and fleeing police on foot before his capture. As a result of that case, Nelson was sentenced to 13 months imprisonment with the Minnesota Department of Corrections; however, the sentence was stayed for three years, and Nelson was sentenced to three years of supervised probation with credit for his time already served in the St. Louis County Jail.

Nelson was also charged with Aid and Abet 1st Degree Sale of a Controlled Substance in 2018 as a result of Operation Jailbird, another Lake Superior Drug and Violent Crime Task Force investigation with Superior Police where fentanyl was being transported to Duluth from Chicago, through St. Paul, and being sold locally by dealers including Nelson. Firearms stolen in the Duluth area were being smuggled to Chicago through St. Paul by the same members of that conspiracy. Nelson's charges in that case were dismissed as part of his guilty plea for his involvement in Operation #Hboyz.

