

Five Sentenced to Prison on Federal Drug Charges

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BENTON – A U.S. District judge sentenced the final defendant of five total co-conspirators for his involvement in a large-scale methamphetamine operation in southern Illinois. Robert Smith, 42, of Los Angeles, California, was sentenced to 27 years in federal prison. Smith pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine and one count of conspiracy to launder money. The case involved more than 100 pounds of methamphetamine distributed in the Southern District of Illinois. Co-conspirator William Moore, 39, of East St. Louis, pled guilty to five counts of distributing methamphetamine, one count of attempted possession with the intent to distribute methamphetamine, one count of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine,

and one count of conspiracy to launder money. He received a 30-year federal prison sentence on April 20, 2022, and he will serve five years of supervised release.

Michael Huffman, 37, of Salem, Illinois, pled guilty to one count of distributing methamphetamine, one count of attempted possession with the intent to distribute methamphetamine, and one count of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. He received an 8-year federal prison sentence on Oct. 27, 2022, and he will serve three years of supervised release. Stacey Barkley, 36 of Caseyville, Illinois, pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. She was sentenced to 87 months in federal prison on Sept. 15, 2021, and she will serve three years of supervised release. Michael Greene, 54, of St. Louis, pled guilty to one count of possession with the intent to distribute methamphetamine and one count of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. He received a 25-month federal prison sentence on Feb. 9, 2023, and he will serve four years of supervised release.

“Trafficking dangerous and addictive drugs into and around southern Illinois will earn conspirators time in federal prison,” said U.S. Attorney Rachelle Aud Crowe. “Thanks to this collaborative effort by law enforcement, more criminals are behind bars.”

"Despite the attention given to fentanyl, methamphetamine remains the top drug seized by quantity in Southern Illinois and is still responsible for destroying many lives," said Special Agent in Charge Michael A. Davis, head of the Drug Enforcement Administration division that leads DEA investigations in Southern Illinois, as well as Missouri and Kansas. "DEA and our federal, state and local partners are dedicated to stopping drug distribution and money laundering operations like this one to protect our citizen's lives and health from the menace of illicit drugs." “Whenever someone involved in drug trafficking is sentenced to prison, it’s a victory for local communities,” said Special Agent in Charge Thomas F. Murdock, IRS Criminal Investigation’s St. Louis Field Office.

“Drug traffickers are in business to make money and they don’t care who they hurt to achieve that objective. The special agents of IRS-CI are proud to use their financial expertise to help find and disrupt drug trafficking networks and put a stop to the harm they do to communities.” According to court documents, DEA agents investigated the defendants for distributing methamphetamine in St. Clair County from February to October 2019. In recorded buys, confidential sources purchased more than 750 grams of methamphetamine from Moore on five occasions at a restaurant in East St. Louis. On July 9, 2019, Greene received more than 58 grams of methamphetamine from Moore with intent to distribute.

On July 10, 2019, agents seized a package of 6,310 grams of methamphetamine before Huffman could retrieve at Moore’s request. On Aug. 19, 2019, agents arrested Barkley in possession of more than 100 grams of methamphetamine from Moore. In court

proceedings, Smith was held responsible for supplying more than 100 pounds of methamphetamine from California in the drug operation led by Moore. In furtherance of the financial crime conspiracy, Moore laundered drug proceeds for Smith to facilitate the trafficking operation. DEA led the investigation with support from the IRS. Assistant U.S. Attorney Amanda Fischer prosecuted the case. This case was part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces operation.