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MHIT Recovers Heroin, Marijuana during Wheeling Island Traffic Stop

WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA - The Mountaineer Highway Interdiction Team (MHIT) was hard at work on Sunday evening on Wheeling Island and recovered a large quantity of heroin from an Ohio man.

SHAWN LEMONT McCLAIN, 33 years old of Cleveland, Ohio, was arrested last night on the felony charge of "Possession with Intent to Deliver a Schedule II Controlled Substance" after the car he was in was stopped by MHIT officers on South Front Street for a traffic violation. McCLAIN was found to have two cellophane bags of heroin with a total weight of approximately 15 grams.

The investigation revealed that McCLAIN and the other occupants of the vehicle, including CHAUNITA R. WILLIAMS, had traveled to Cleveland on Friday and purchased the heroin. The drugs were then transported back to Wheeling where there were plans for the heroin to be distributed.

McCLAIN faces not less than one nor more than fifteen years in state prison on his charge.

WILLIAMS, who is 32 years old, was charged with the misdemeanor offense of "Possession of Marijuana" after officers found a small quantity of the substance in her purse. She faces 90 days to six months in jail if convicted.

"By participating in MHIT we are able to work closely with other agencies and to perform special patrols in areas that need extra attention from time to time," said Chief Shawn Schwertzfeger of the Wheeling Police Department, whose K-9 officer assisted with the arrests. "We are also able to respond quickly and effectively to citizen complaints."

"MHIT continues to change the way that we fight crime in the Northern District of West Virginia," said U.S. Attorney William Ihlenfeld, II. "It puts us in a position to seize dangerous drugs like heroin that come to the Ohio Valley from large cities like Cleveland before they make it to the street for distribution."

MHIT officers from the West Virginia State Police also were involved in the arrests of McCLAIN and WILLIAMS on Sunday. In addition to the Wheeling Police and the State Police, the group also includes the Ohio County Sheriff's Department, the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

MHIT's primary purpose is to enhance regional interdiction operations in order to slow the flow of illegal drugs into and through the State of West Virginia. The major focus of MHIT, which began operating in the fall of 2010, is on highways and state routes but it also concentrates on airports, bus terminals, hotels, motels and parcel and package interdiction.

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