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ARMED CAREER CRIMINAL SENTENCED TO OVER 20 YEARS IN PRISON FOR FIREARM AND DRUG RELATED OFFENSES

GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA – William Harrison Quarterman, III, 33, of Gainesville, Florida, was sentenced on September 20, 2022, to 21 years in federal prison after he pled guilty to drug trafficking, possessing a firearm in furtherance of drug trafficking, and possessing a firearm as a convicted felon on May 9, 2022. The sentence was announced by Jason R. Coody, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

Quarterman will serve concurrent sentences of 16 years for the Possession with Intent to Distribute Eutylone (a Schedule I controlled substance) and Possession of a Firearm by Convicted Felon charges, followed by a consecutive 5 years for the Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of Drug Trafficking charge. The Court also ordered six years of supervised release following Quarterman's prison term.

“The collaborative efforts of our partners in the Gainesville Gun Violence Initiative continue to produce impactful results, and we will continue working tirelessly to make North Florida safer,” said U.S. Attorney Coody. “This sentence removes a habitual felon from our community and sends a clear message that there are real and severe consequences for federal firearm offenses.”

On April 15, 2021, deputies from the Alachua County Sheriff's Office were dispatched in reference to a domestic disturbance after Quarterman's girlfriend called 911 and then left their shared apartment for fear of her own safety. Responding deputies made contact with the victim near the apartment, and while speaking with her about the incident, were alerted that Quarterman was leaving the area in their shared vehicle. After learning that Quarterman had exchanged vehicles with a relative to avoid arrest, deputies again located him on foot in the Veteran's Memorial Park. When Quarterman noticed a deputy had spotted him, Quarterman fled from deputies on foot and was eventually apprehended by a K9 deputy after he became entangled in dense vegetation in a wooded area near the park.

Alachua County Sheriff Clovis Watson, Jr. added, “We are more effective when we work together in our efforts to combat gun violence and will continue to make public safety a number one priority for our community.”

“We’re always excited to collaborate with partners like the Alachua County Sheriff’s Office,” said ATF Tampa Division Special Agent in Charge Craig W. Saier. “No one law enforcement agency can combat violent crimes alone, which is why the Gainesville Gun Violence Initiative is so important.”

When deputies took Quarterman into custody, he was wearing a multicolored backpack. A search of that backpack revealed a loaded .22 caliber revolver, almost 50 grams of Eutylone packaged for sale in multiple baggies, marijuana, and parsley that Quarterman had dyed red to attempt to sell as “spice.” Quarterman made statements while on scene that the items in the backpack would send him back to prison. Quarterman is a convicted felon, and he was arrested on numerous state charges stemming from this incident.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms adopted the case for federal prosecution and conducted additional investigation. Quarterman had multiple prior felony convictions, including two convictions for selling cocaine, possessing cocaine, a felony domestic battery conviction, and a host of felony convictions related to an armed home invasion robbery he committed with other codefendants. Quarterman had only been out of prison for less than two years after serving a fourteen-year sentence in the Florida Department of Corrections. Quarterman was determined to qualify as an Armed Career Criminal, which provided for an enhanced sentence, including a fifteen-year minimum mandatory term of imprisonment.

This sentencing resulted from the collaborative work of the Alachua County Sheriff’s Office and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Chris Elsey.

The Gainesville GVI was established by the United States Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Florida to stem the escalating gun violence in Gainesville and the surrounding area. As GVI partners, the State Attorney’s Office for the Eight Judicial Circuit, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Marshals Service, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Gainesville Police Department, the Alachua County Sheriff’s Office, the Alachua Police Department, the University of Florida Police Department, and the Florida Department of Corrections share this commitment to protecting public safety.

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