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United States Attorney's Office
District of Oregon

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Salem Drug Trafficker Sentenced to Federal Prison

PORTLAND, Ore.—A Salem, Oregon area drug trafficker was sentenced to more than 12 years in federal prison today after being arrested with distribution quantities of methamphetamine and heroin and two handguns.

Chase Benjamin Russell-Brown, 31, was sentenced to 150 months in federal prison and four years' supervised release.

According to court documents, on November 5, 2019, officers from the Salem Police Department Strategic Investigations Unit (SIU) were conducting surveillance at a Salem hotel known for drug activity. Officers observed Russell-Brown, who had twice been arrested in the prior two months for drug trafficking offenses, exit the hotel carrying a bag and leave in a vehicle with expired registration. When the officers attempted a traffic stop, Russell-Brown fled.

Russell-Brown led officers into a crowded grocery store parking lot where the officers attempted to block him in a parking aisle. When officers positioned behind Russell-Brown's vehicle approached on foot, Russell-Brown put his car into reverse, accelerated, and rammed a patrol car, nearly hitting the officers. After the collision, an officer in another patrol car drove forward and contacted Russell-Brown's vehicle from the front, attempting to pin the vehicle in place. As officers approached on foot a second time, Russell-Brown continued to accelerate the vehicle trying to break free. Finally, officers were able to break the window of Russell-Brown's vehicle and place him under arrest.

Officers found two loaded handguns on Russell-Brown's person and several dozen grams of methamphetamine and heroin, drug packaging material, and additional ammunition and magazines in his vehicle. In total, approximately 380 grams of methamphetamine were seized from Russell-Brown during his three drug trafficking arrests.

On November 21, 2019, a federal grand jury in Portland returned an eight-count indictment charging Russell-Brown with possessing with intent to distribute methamphetamine and heroin, using and carrying a firearm during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime, and illegally possessing a firearm as a convicted felon.

On September 16, 2020, Russell-Brown pleaded guilty to possessing with intent to distribute methamphetamine and illegally possessing a firearm as a convicted felon.

U.S. Attorney Scott Erik Asphaug of the District of Oregon made the announcement.

This case was investigated by the Salem Police Department with assistance from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). It was prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Oregon.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). PSN is the centerpiece of the Department of Justice's violent crime reduction efforts. PSN is an evidence-based program proven to be effective at reducing violent crime. Through PSN, a broad spectrum of stakeholders work together to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in the community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. As part of this strategy, PSN focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and reentry programs for lasting reductions in crime.

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