

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Man Apprehended with Gun, Ammunition, Drugs and Money Near Elementary School Sentenced to 5 Years in Prison on Federal Firearm Charge

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ST. CROIX — U.S. Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert announced Thursday that Rakem Hendrickson, 29, of St. Croix, appeared before Chief Judge Wilma A. Lewis, in District Court Wednesday and was sentenced on the charge of use of a firearm during a drug trafficking crime. Chief Judge Lewis sentenced Hendrickson to a 5-year prison term, a 4-year period of supervised release, a fine of \$1,000, and assessed a special assessment of \$100.

According to court documents, on February 16, 2018, the Virgin Islands Police Department received a tip from a concerned citizen that Hendrickson was selling drugs from his Jeep Wrangler; that Hendrickson was known to carry a firearm; and that he routinely parked the Jeep in the vicinity of Dynasty (Paul's) Grocery Store. VIPD officers established surveillance at that location and thereafter observed Hendrickson park and exit his vehicle. Officers observed drug paraphernalia consisting of a clear plastic bag containing multiple vials in plain view, located in the back of Hendrickson's Jeep. Shortly thereafter, officers obtained and executed a search warrant. As a result, officers located and confiscated a loaded Glock 22 Austria handgun, 2 additional magazines, 82 rounds of ammunition, approximately 133 grams of marijuana, drug paraphernalia in the form of 94 plastic vials, a digital scale, 2 mason jars, plastic baggies, and \$2,584 cash. The foregoing occurred within 1,000 feet of the Lew Muckle Elementary School.

The VIPD and Homeland Security Investigations investigated the case. The DEA Southeast Laboratory in Miami analyzed the marijuana. Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel H. Huston prosecuted the case.