



Sarasota man sentenced to federal prison on drug, weapons charges

By **WFTS Webteam**

A 25-year-old Sarasota man is heading to federal prison after entering a plea on weapons and drug trafficking charges.

Steven Michael Pace was sentenced to nine years and one month behind bars per a release issued by the Department of Justice. The sentence was handed down on Friday by U.S. District Court Judge Elizabeth A. Kovachevich in Tampa.

Pace entered a guilty plea on possession of destructive devices and armed drug trafficking charges in February. In addition to the court sentence, Pace must also forfeit all firearms and ammunition seized in this case.

According to court documents, in February 2016, Pace, along with Katie Smith, possessed two improvised pipe bombs and two grenades when authorities entered their residence. The pair was also found to be in possession of 280 grams of synthetic marijuana at the time.

Several firearms – including one that was reported stolen – were also discovered in the home. Pace admitted to carrying at least one of those firearms during drug transactions. Smith, 26, previously entered a plea of guilty to similar charges and was sentenced to 18 months in federal prison.

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives with assistance from the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office. Pace and Smith were prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Kaitlin O'Donnell.

Source:

<https://www.abcactionnews.com/news/region-sarasota-manatee/sarasota-man-sentenced-to-federal-prison-on-drug-weapons-charges>