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For Immediate Release

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Human Traffickers Sentenced to a Combined 46 Years in Prison

Defendants Trafficked Several Girls, Furnished Meth

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced today that 20-year-old Darius Stone was sentenced to 25 years in prison in connection with a human trafficking criminal case involving four juvenile female victims. In addition, an accomplice, 42-year-old Danyelle Willis was also sentenced to 21 years and 8 months on April 7.

On February 23, Stone pleaded guilty to 19 felony counts related to human trafficking of four young girls between the ages of 13 and 15. The charges include sex crimes, kidnapping, robbery, making criminal threats and furnishing methamphetamine to minors. Willis pleaded guilty to seven felony charges on February 8, related to trafficking two of the minor girls, ages 14 and 15. The charges included human trafficking, furnishing methamphetamine, and other sex crimes. Willis also admitted a prior felony conviction for murder from Minnesota in October 2000.

“Sex trafficking is a lucrative industry that generates over \$810 million a year for criminals in San Diego County,” said District Attorney Summer Stephan. “Traffickers treat children like property that are sold like a piece of pizza to criminal buyers. As they did in this case, traffickers use deception, violence and drugs to control their victims. We want victims of sex trafficking to know they can break free from this horrific cycle and regain their freedom and dignity and that our team is here to support victims and hold traffickers accountable.”

Defendant Darius Stone would contact underage girls on social media, including Snapchat and Instagram. His messages would often be flirtatious initially, but the conversations would occasionally lead to sexual relationships with the girls. Stone would then encourage the girls to engage in acts of prostitution by promising a lavish and exciting lifestyle. As is common in human trafficking cases, Stone used fear and manipulation to further trap the girls in his human trafficking scheme. This included verbal threats and furnishing methamphetamine to the girls.

The co-defendant, Danyelle Willis, assisted Stone with his operation, at times providing transportation for the minors. He also encouraged some of the minors to engage in prostitution and he was convicted of having sexual contact with one of them.

In December 2020, a concerned citizen from Oceanside called 911 to report a young woman begging for help at her front door. The concerned citizen reported that she observed a young man chase after the juvenile, physically assault her, and take her phone. The Oceanside Police Department quickly responded and eventually arrested the man who attacked the young girl, later identified as Stone.

It quickly became clear that the young girl was a victim of human trafficking and a year-long investigation ensued. Detective Kekai Thompson with the Oceanside Police Department and Detective Katherine Dabbaghian with the San Diego County Human Trafficking Task Force worked diligently to uncover additional victims and additional evidence, and worked closely with Deputy District Attorney Matthew Hardy along with the prosecution team to bring justice and protect the young victims.

You can report suspected human trafficking by calling 911, by contacting the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at (888) 3737-888 or text BeFree (233733). San Diego's local HOTLINE is: (619) 666-2757.

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.

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