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QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY MELINDA KATZ
LAUNCHES HATE CRIMES BUREAU

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz today announced a dedicated Hate Crimes Bureau in her newly reorganized Felony Trial Division. This Bureau is one of the first in the nation committed exclusively to preventing, investigating and prosecuting hate crimes.

District Attorney Katz said, “We are the ‘World’s Borough’ with the most diverse population of any county in the nation. Hate-mongers and those who hurt others based on their own prejudices have no place in Queens. This Bureau takes a multifaceted approach to stopping hate crimes by working collaboratively with others to combat bias, as well as developing meaningful programs to bring about positive change. The Bureau will, of course, vigorously prosecute anyone who hurts others based on their own prejudices and hate.”

The DA’s Hate Crimes Bureau engages in extensive community outreach to foster positive ties between impacted communities and law enforcement. The goal is to also combat racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia and other hate-inspired bias crimes through education. The Bureau also crafts innovative sentencing programs to address and reform so they do not offend again. This specialized Bureau works closely with our Office of Immigrant Affairs and with the NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force to achieve these objectives.

People from all over the world come to this Borough to work and live and make a new life for themselves and their families. It is this amazing diversity that is our strength and makes our Borough so vibrant. But, because of this diversity, some who have hate in their heart will seek to wreak havoc and attempt to weaken and divide us through disgusting and cowardly bias crimes.

The individual hate crime victim often suffers significant psychological harm on top of the economic or physical injury caused by the underlying criminal act. Also, members of the victims’ group, and other minority groups, can suffer secondary injury by becoming fearful and isolating from others. By aggressively addressing hate crimes, the District Attorney’s Office is making clear that hate crimes will not be tolerated and this Bureau will aggressively tackle these issues.

To lead the Hate Crimes Bureau, DA Katz has selected Assistant District Attorney Michael E. Brovner as its Bureau Chief. A 23-year veteran of the Office, Chief Brovner, previously served as Deputy Bureau Chief in the former Gang Violence and Hate Crimes Bureau. For more than 20 years, Chief Brovner has prosecuted hate crimes. He has lectured throughout New York State on hate crimes prosecution, trained other prosecutors and members of law enforcement. The Hate Crimes Bureau is staffed by a talented and dedicated team of prosecutors and investigators who use their years of experience and expertise to ensure that these repulsive crimes are effectively and successfully prosecuted.

The Hate Crimes Bureau will operate within the District Attorney's Office's Trial Division under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney Pishoy Yacoub.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted at www.queensda.org.