



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
125-QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW 01 GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2020

CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org

**QUEENS RESIDENT CHARGED IN STRAY BULLET SHOOTING
THAT KILLED MARRIED MOTHER OF THREE IN JACKSON HEIGHTS**

*Bullet Ripped Through Bedroom Window Striking Woman;
Victim's Teen Son Discovered His Mom Dying in Pool of Blood;
Defendant Faces Up to 25 Years-to-Life in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Issam Elabbar, 31, has been charged with murder, manslaughter and other crimes for allegedly firing a single shot on the morning of Wednesday, September 30 that pierced a 3rd floor apartment window and struck a woman, killing her.

District Attorney Katz said, "This is a heart-wrenching case. A youngster, just 14-years-old, woke to the sounds of his mother gasping for air and found her bleeding and near death. Because of the defendant's depraved indifference, a husband is now without a wife and three children are now without a mom. How senseless. Firing a gun in a residential neighborhood shows utter disregard for the tragedy that can result. We cannot heal their pain, but my office will do everything possible to bring this family justice."

Elabbar, of 41st Avenue in Corona, is awaiting arraignment in Queens Criminal Court on a complaint charging him with murder in the second degree, manslaughter in the second degree, criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree and attempted petit larceny. If convicted, the defendant faces up to 25 years-to-life in prison.

District Attorney Katz said, shortly before 1 a.m. on Wednesday, September 30, 2020, the victim, Bertha Arriaga, was near a window of her family's 34th Avenue home when a bullet flew through the glass and struck her in her lower neck, piercing her carotid artery. Video surveillance of the street allegedly shows defendant Elabbar and another individual using a tool to cut through a chain tying a motorized scooter to a fixed object on the sidewalk. While fleeing the scene, the defendant was observed firing one shot from a loaded weapon in his right hand across his left shoulder without looking to see where the shot would be directed.

Continuing, the oldest of the victim's three children heard noises and followed the sound into his parent's room. When the teen turned on the light, he saw his mother on the floor, bleeding and barely breathing. He yelled out for his father, who attempted CPR, but the 43-year-old woman succumbed to the single gunshot wound.

DA Katz added that the defendant was apprehended after the video surveillance of the alleged attempted bike theft was released to the media and a \$10,000 reward offered for information leading to the capture and prosecution of the shooter.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Douglas Deotto, of the New York City Police Department's 115th Precinct Detective Squad, under the supervision of Sergeant Brian McManus and Lieutenant Filastin Srour and Detective

Joseph Bey, of the NYPD's Queens North Homicide Squad, under the supervision of Sergeant Andre Rosa and Lieutenant Timothy Thomson.

Senior Assistant District Attorneys Kristin Papadopolous and Christine McCoy, of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau, will be prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Brad A. Leventhal, Bureau Chief, Peter J. McCormack III, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, John W. Kosinski and Kenneth A. Appelbaum, Deputy Bureau Chiefs and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

#

Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

