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**D.A. BROWN: FAR ROCKAWAY RESIDENT SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS IN PRISON
IN SHOOTING DEATH OF FRIEND**

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Far Rockaway man has been sentenced to 20 years in prison for the slaying of his 20-year-old friend in April of 2001.

District Attorney Brown said, "Though today's sentencing closes the book on the criminal prosecution, it doesn't eradicate the harm and suffering that the defendant's senseless act inflicted on the victim and his family. I hope that they can take solace in knowing that justice has been done and that society will be protected from the defendant for a very long time."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Shatell Spurgeon, 26, of 85-02 Rockaway Beach Boulevard in Far Rockaway, Queens, no known employment. He was convicted last month of first-degree manslaughter and second-degree criminal possession of a weapon before Queens Supreme Court Justice Mark H. Spires who imposed today's determinate term of 20 years in prison. The sentence is to run consecutive to a seven-year prison term that the defendant is presently serving for a second-degree attempted robbery conviction he committed in Binghamton, New York.

District Attorney said that, according to the trial testimony, at about 9:30 p.m. on April 22, 2001, at Beach 86th Street and Rockaway Beach Boulevard, the defendant and his intended victim, Alvin Briggs, 22, were engaged in a verbal altercation. Mr. Briggs then walked away from the defendant to enter his vehicle when he observed the defendant reach into his waist. As Mr. Briggs began to drive away he heard a single gunshot and observed the victim, Damon Waiter, 20, who was seated in the front passenger seat bleeding and shaking. The bullet had traveled through the back window of Mr. Briggs' vehicle striking Mr. Waiter once in the head.

Assistant District Attorney Jack Warsawsky, Deputy Chief of the District Attorney's Homicide Trials Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Brad A. Leventhal, Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

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