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D.A. BROWN: QUEENS MAN SENTENCED TO TWELVE YEARS IN PRISON
FOR ASSAULTING POLICE OFFICER
Officer's Gun Discharged During Struggle

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a Cambria Heights man has been sentenced to 12 years in prison for the June 2005 assault on a uniformed police officer in which he seriously injured the officer by grabbing his service revolver and causing it to discharge, wounding the officer in the leg.

District Attorney Brown said, "Unfortunately, as a result of the injuries he suffered during the attack, the police officer was forced to retire from the NYPD on a disability pension. This case is a reminder of the demanding and dangerous challenges that police officers face each day in protecting the public."

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Lasana Philbert, 23, of 117-36 229th Street in Cambria Heights. The defendant was found guilty on January 23, 2007, of assault on a police officer and second-degree assault after a two-week trial by a jury of six men and six women that deliberated for about eight hours before returning its verdict before Queens Supreme Court Justice Daniel Lewis. The defendant was sentenced earlier today to a determinate term of 12 years in prison.

The District Attorney said that, according to the trial testimony, on the morning of June 14, 2005, while on uniformed patrol in a park near the Cross Island Parkway at 121st Avenue and the Laurelton Parkway, Police Officer Christopher Wiesneski, 32, of the NYPD's 105th Precinct, observed the defendant sitting on the ground against a tree and in possession of a quantity of marijuana. When Officer Wiesneski confronted the defendant, he lunged for the officer's service revolver. During the struggle, the gun went off and discharged a bullet into Officer Wiesneski's left knee and lower leg. Officer Wiesneski was transported to a local Queens hospital, where he underwent surgery for the gunshot wound.

Assistant District Attorneys Patricia A. Malloy, a supervisor in the District Attorney's Criminal Court Bureau, and Catherine O'Connell, also of the Criminal Court Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Joan I. Ritter, Bureau Chief, and Kimberly A. Affronti, Deputy Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Senior Executive Assistant District Attorney for Trials James C. Quinn and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorneys for Trials John H. Larsen and Robert J. Masters.

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Note to Editors: E-version of this press release posted at www.queensda.org.