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**D.A. BROWN: DNA "COLD HIT" DEFENDANT CONVICTED OF RAPE
AND ARMED ROBBERY IN 1996 ATTACK ON QUEENS HAIR SALON EMPLOYEE**

Faces Up to 50 Years in Prison

_____ Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a 38-year-old man apprehended as a result of a DNA sample he had been required to provide in an unrelated drug case has been convicted of the violent rape and armed robbery of a 30-year-old Richmond Hill beauty salon employee in 1996.

District Attorney Brown said, "After nearly ten years of avoiding arrest in the case, this recidivist was unwittingly snagged by his own genes when the DNA sample he had been required to provide when sentenced to prison on unrelated drug charges was positively matched to a DNA sample collected at the hospital from the rape victim. This case underscores yet again the crucial importance of DNA evidence which is irrefutable proof of guilt or innocence."

District Attorney Brown added, "The prosecution is the result of the City's Backlog Project which is an initiative that reopens sexual assault cases in which perpetrators have been identified using DNA from rape kits that are matched with convicted felony offender DNA profiles on file with New York and national DNA databanks."

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Alex Jackson, 38, who last month finished a 2½ to 5 year prison term at the Riverview Correctional Facility in Ogdensburg, New York, on drug sale charges. Shortly thereafter, he was arrested and arraigned on the Queens County grand jury indictment charging him with the rape and armed robbery.

A jury of nine women and three men deliberated for less than an hour before finding Jackson guilty of first-degree rape, second-degree burglary and first-degree robbery. Queens Supreme Court Justice Richard L. Buchter, who presided at the two-week trial, set a sentencing date of May 22, 2007, at which time the defendant faces up to 50 years in prison.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the trial testimony, at about 4:00 p.m. on April 1, 1996, the defendant forced his way into the Cedeño Hair Salon, located at 88-02 Van Wyck Expressway in Richmond Hill, after store hours. Upon entering, the defendant produced a black handgun and forced the store's lone occupant – a 30-year-old female employee – into the bathroom where he raped and robbed her of \$150 in cash. The defendant warned the victim that if she told anyone he would come back the next day. Before fleeing on foot, the defendant taunted the victim by leaving behind a piece of paper on which he had scribbled a false name and phone number and saying, "If you like me, you can call me."

The District Attorney said the victim was treated at a local hospital where medical personnel prepared a sexual assault evidence kit, which included DNA evidence recovered from the victim. When the defendant was recently convicted of felony sale of a controlled substance in Manhattan, a DNA sample was taken by New York law enforcement officials. That sample was entered into the National DNA database known as CODIS (Combined DNA Index System) and positively matched the rape kit DNA collected in the Richmond Hill case.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Richard Santangelo of the New York City Police Department's Queens Special Victims Squad under the supervision of Lieutenant Arthur Hall, Commanding Officer.

Assistant District Attorney Karen B. Migdal, Supervisor of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Marjory D. Fisher, 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.