



DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
QUEENS COUNTY  
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD  
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568  
718-286-6000

**RICHARD A. BROWN**  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 14, 2008

**CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE**  
(718) 286-6315

**D.A. BROWN: QUEENS TEENAGER CHARGED IN FATAL SHOOTING**  
**OF FEMALE COUSIN VISITING FROM OUT OF STATE**

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that an 18-year-old Far Rockaway resident has been charged with fatally shooting his cousin who was visiting from Massachusetts for the summer. The incident occurred when the defendant allegedly pulled the trigger twice on an unlicensed gun.

District Attorney Brown said, "Illegal firearms pose a serious and deadly threat to public safety. In this case, the defendant is accused of playing with a loaded weapon and costing his young cousin her life. As a result of his alleged reckless actions, her grieving family must now face the difficult and heartbreaking chore of adjusting to a life empty of her presence."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Felix Cruz, 18, of 22-20 Cornaga Avenue in Far Rockaway, Queens. The defendant, who is being held pending arraignment in Queens Criminal Court, is charged with second-degree manslaughter, second-degree criminal possession of a weapon, criminally negligent homicide and tampering with physical evidence. If convicted, he faces up to fifteen years in prison.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the charges, the defendant was showing a .25 caliber, semiautomatic handgun to his cousin, Veronica Cruz, 18, of Clinton, Massachusetts, at approximately 8:20 p.m. last night, August, 13, 2008, inside his Cornaga Avenue apartment when he pointed the firearm at her and pulled the trigger. The gun made a clicking noise and nothing happened. The defendant allegedly then pulled the trigger again, this time discharging a bullet that struck Ms. Cruz in the face, killing her. The defendant is alleged to have admitted that he knew the gun and/or magazine contained a bullet and that he got rid of the gun by throwing it out of a window.

The investigation was conducted by detectives assigned to the New York City Police Department's 101<sup>st</sup> Precinct Detective Squad.

Assistant District Attorney Teri Ann M. Puliafico, of the District Attorney's Homicide Investigations Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Peter T. Reese, Bureau Chief, Peter J. McCormack III, Deputy Bureau Chief, and Richard B. Schaeffer, Supervisor, 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.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

#

Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted at [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org).