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**MORE THAN TWO DOZEN REPUTED GANG MEMBERS CHARGED IN INDICTMENT;**  
**CRIMES INCLUDE MURDER, ATTEMPTED MURDER AND GUN POSSESSION**  
**IN AND AROUND ASTORIA, LONG ISLAND CITY HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS**

*Twenty-Eight Individuals Charged Following Long-Term Investigation*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, joined by NYPD Chief of Detectives James Essig, of the New York City Police Department, announced today that 28 individuals have been indicted by a Queens County grand jury. The defendants, alleged members of warring gang factions within the Queensbridge and Ravenswood public housing developments, are variously charged with murder, attempted murder, attempted assault, criminal possession of a weapon and other crimes. They are all charged with conspiracy to commit murder and possession of illegal firearms.

District Attorney Katz said, “Gang warfare will not become the norm in Queens County. My Office is committed to working with our law enforcement partners to make certain no community should live and be terrorized by violent gang members who demonstrate a complete lack of regard for human life. As alleged, these defendants have been drivers of gun violence, sometimes in broad daylight, and often with innocent by-standers nearby, in Long Island City and Astoria over the past few years. The indictment announced today covers multiple conspiracies, 20 acts of violence and related weapons possession incidents. The violence, motivated by a desire for geographical supremacy by gang members, created a climate of fear in Queensbridge and Ravenswood.”

Police Commissioner Dermot Shea said, “The NYPD spares no resource in dismantling the violent gangs and crews that prey on people in our City’s communities. I commend our police investigators, and the prosecutors in Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz’s office, for their sustained vigilance in leading us to justice with these criminal charges.”

The 28 defendants are charged in a 141-count indictment. Two of the defendants are accused of carrying out the brazen, broad daylight killing of schoolteacher George Rosa. The 53-year-old victim was walking his dog near the Queensbridge Houses when he was struck by a stray bullet after two alleged gang members from the Ravenswood Houses shot at and missed a Queensbridge foe on July 25, 2020. Mr. Rosa died just over a month later from the fatal gunshot wound. Seven other people were also shot in and around these public houses and recovered from the injuries.

The indictment includes the murder in the second degree charge in relation to the killing of Mr. Rosa, three conspiracies to commit murder – each with a related conspiracy to possess illegal guns – and a single count of assault in the first degree. Also, charged in this indictment, there are 23 counts of attempted murder in the

second degree, 19 counts of attempted assault in the first degree, six counts of assault in the second degree, 54 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree and 19 counts of reckless endangerment.

According to the indictment:

- The defendants are allegedly members or associates of one of three large rival groups/gangs operating in and around Long Island City and Astoria: Jet Blue and the Makk Ballers in Queensbridge and Money the Motivation/Obligated to Money (MTM/OTM) in Ravenswood, each of which has its own affiliations with other groups/gangs in the area.
- Members and associates of the two Queensbridge groups, Jet Blue and Makk Ballers, are accused of regularly conspiring to commit and participating in criminal, violent acts against each other in order to assert their dominance within the housing development.
- In addition to the rivalry between Jet Blue and Makk Baller members, a separate feud between Queensbridge factions and Ravenswood gang members allegedly resulted in violent, criminal activity, including at least two homicides – the July 25, 2020, shooting of George Rosa, and the as-yet-unsolved August 9, 2020, killing of Magdy Saleh, a Makk Baller from Queensbridge.
- It was common practice for members and associates of one group to travel to territory controlled by another, typically in a vehicle, to seek out rival gang members to target, a process referred to as “spinning” or “spinning the block.” These alleged acts of violence between rival gang members were typically precipitated by such “spinning.” It was also part of the conspiracies for members and associates to purchase, possess, transport, and keep readily available loaded firearms and ammunition.
- As part of the conspiracies, gang members and associates used code words and phrases to hide the alleged criminal nature of their communication and to avoid detection and apprehension by members of law enforcement. Among those code words and phrases were various references to firearms, such as “jackie,” “jumanji,” “shorty,” “shit,” “girl,” “grip,” “heat” and “bitch.”
- It was also part of the conspiracies for the defendants to communicate with gang members and associates on behalf of incarcerated members in order to convey messages, orders and other directives to members on the street. Communications with incarcerated gang members and associates was in coded, guarded and cryptic language, in order to avoid detection and apprehension by members of law enforcement.

DA Katz said the earliest alleged act of violence charged in this indictment occurred on May 18, 2019, on 10<sup>th</sup> Street near 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue where video surveillance allegedly shows defendant Donovan Harvey, 23, pass a firearm to another defendant, who then fired several shots at an unknown target. The pair then ran into a building in the Queensbridge Houses and went up to the rooftop. A loaded gun was recovered from the roof and several months later, the two defendants were overheard on a phone call talking about the shooting and stating the target was Jahi Mays, who is alleged to be a member of the Makk Ballers.

On July 3, 2019, according to the charges, defendants Steven Johnson and Tyler King, reputed members of the Makk Ballers street gang, were observed on surveillance video walking across the Queensbridge housing complex and engaging in gunfire with several members of Jet Blue, hitting one in the foot.

Three days later, according to the charges, defendant Jayka Jones, in retaliation for the July 3<sup>rd</sup> shooting, chased King through the courtyard of the Queensbridge Houses and allegedly shot at him multiple times in broad daylight as nearby residents scurried for cover. King escaped unharmed. One of the bullets, however, pierced the kitchen window of an apartment and landed on the kitchen counter.

A week later, Jones and other Jet Blue members allegedly succeeded in shooting King twice during a drive-by.

Continuing, the DA said, on May 19, 2020, around 3:30 a.m., defendant Tyheem Valles was directing his girlfriend as she tried to parallel park a car on 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue. A black automobile approached, and video surveillance of the scene shows someone lean out of the passenger side window and fire multiple shots at the couple. Then the black car stops and there are several more shots fired – this time from the driver’s side of the black car. The woman was struck by a ricochet in the forehead. The victim was taken to a nearby hospital and recovered from the injury.

DA Katz said the investigation began in March 2018 and initially focused on violence between gangs in the Queensbridge Houses. In Spring 2020, the investigation broadened to violence between the Makk Ballers, who controlled Queensbridge, and Obligated to Money/Money the Motivation (OTM/MTM), who controlled Ravenswood.

The DA said, through community cooperation in providing surveillance video, to advanced ballistics evidence collection and examination, among other investigative tools, the District Attorney’s Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau, worked in conjunction with the Violence Reduction Task Force (VRTF – part of the NYPD’s Gun Violence Suppression Division), and the 114<sup>th</sup> Precinct Detective Squad.

The joint investigation was conducted by the Queens County District Attorney’s Office with New York City Police Department. NYPD Detectives Stephen Berardi and Kellan O’Neill led the investigation, under the supervision of Sergeant Andrew Dunton, and under the overall supervision of Captain Thomas Passolo and Deputy Chief Jason Savino, of the Gun Violence Suppressions Division. The 114<sup>th</sup> Precinct Detective Squad is supervised by Lieutenant Brian Hilmann, under the overall supervision of Deputy Chief Julie Morrill.

Assistant District Attorneys Graham Amodeo, Genevieve Gadaleta and Alana Weber, of the District Attorney’s Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau, are prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Jonathan Sennett, Bureau Chief Michelle Goldstein, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of Investigations Gerard Brave.

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## **ADDENDUM**

**IKE FORD**, 18, of Queens, has been charged with murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Ford faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

**DELANTE AIKEN**, 19, of Queens, has been charged with murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Aiken faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

*Defendants below alleged to be members of the Makk Ballers street gang:*

**DEVON BATTLE**, 25, of Queens, is charged with two counts of attempted murder and other crimes. If convicted, Battle faces up to 25 years in prison.

**MATUSIM CARTER**, 26, of the Bronx, is charged with four counts of attempted murder and other crimes. If convicted, Carter faces up to 25 years in prison.

**MALIK HARRIS**, 23, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Harris faces up to 25 years in prison.

**JERRY DOUGLAS**, 33, of Queens, is charged with conspiracy in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Douglas faces up to 25 years in prison.

**TIMIA HODGES**, 22, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Hodges faces up to 25 years in prison.

**TYREIK JACKSON**, 35, of Queens, is charged with conspiracy in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Jackson faces up to 25 years in prison.

**STEVEN JOHNSON**, 20, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Johnson faces up to 25 years in prison.

**TYLER KING**, 21, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, King faces up to 25 years in prison.

**JAH MAYS**, 34, of Queens, is charged with conspiracy in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Mays faces up to 25 years in prison.

**BILLY ROBINSON**, 24, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Robinson faces up to 25 years in prison.

**MOHAMED SALEH**, 35, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Saleh faces up to 25 years in prison.

**TYHEEM VALLES**, 25, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Valles faces up to 25 years in prison.

**LESTER WILLIAMS**, 29, of Queens, is charged with three counts of attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Williams faces up to 25 years in prison.

*Defendants below alleged to be affiliated with Jet Blue:*

**DONOVAN HARVEY**, 23, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Harvey faces up to 25 years in prison.

**JAKYA JONES**, 21, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Jones faces up to 25 years in prison.

*Defendants below alleged to be members of the OTM/MTM street gang:*

**SHAHEID GIBSON**, 27, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Gibson faces up to 25 years in prison.

**CHRISTIAN JONES**, 22, of Queens, is charged with attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Jones faces up to 25 years in prison.

**SILAS ROSS**, 27, of Queens, is charged with four counts of attempted murder in the second degree and other crimes. If convicted, Ross faces up to 25 years in prison.

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**Note to Editors:** Archived press releases are available at [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org).

