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BRONX MAN INDICTED FOR FIRST NYC MURDER OF 2021
OUTSIDE UMBRELLA HOTEL IN KEW GARDENS

*Defendant Allegedly Shot and Killed One and Injured Two Others;
Shooting Followed New Year's Party Dispute That Spilled onto Residential Street;
Defendant Faces Up to 25 Years-to-Life in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Richard Swygert, 19, has been indicted by a Queens grand jury and arraigned in Supreme Court on murder and related charges. The defendant is accused of fatally shooting a 20-year-old Rosedale man and injuring two other individuals outside a Kew Gardens hotel in the early morning hours of January 1, 2021.

District Attorney Katz said, "The defendant's alleged actions led to the first homicide in New York City this year. Senseless shootings have brought grief and heartache to far too many families in our neighborhoods. My Office will continue to work with our law enforcement and community partners to stop the proliferation of guns in Queens and to hold accountable perpetrators of gun violence."

Swygert, of Harrison Avenue in the Bronx, was arraigned today before Queens Supreme Court Justice Ushir Pandit-Durant on a seven-count indictment charging him with murder in the second degree and two counts of attempted murder in the second degree, assault in the first and second degree, and two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. Justice Pandit-Durant set the defendant's return date for November 29, 2021. Scott faces up to 25 years-to-life in prison if convicted.

According to the charges, the defendant allegedly pulled out a gun after a disagreement between two groups of guests celebrating New Year's Eve at the now-shuttered Umbrella Hotel on 82nd Avenue and Queens Boulevard in Kew Gardens. At approximately 1 a.m. on the morning of January 1, 2021, the defendant allegedly shot 20-year-old Robert Williams and two other men. Williams died on the scene. The two other victims were taken to local hospitals for medical treatment.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Kevin Granger, Thomas Scalise and James Zozarro of Queens South Homicide Squad.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Courtney Finnerty, of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau, is prosecuting the case, with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Kaitlyn Gaskin, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Peter McCormack III, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, John W. Kosinski and Karen Ross, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, Robert Ciesla, Section Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

