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**QUEENS MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON**  
**FOR ROLE IN JFK CARGO HEIST OF LUXURY DESIGNER GOODS**

*Third Defendant Sentenced to Prison;  
Defendants Pleaded Guilty to Possessing \$2.5 Million in Stolen Gucci and Chanel Gear*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, with the Port Authority Chief Security Officer John Bilich, announced today that Gary McArthur, 44, has been sentenced to up to 13½ years in prison after pleading guilty in June to holding more than \$2.5 million in stolen Gucci and Chanel designer merchandise. The luxury items were part of a May 2020 Kennedy Airport heist of more than \$4 million in expensive goods. McArthur along with co-defendant David Lacarriere, 34, were caught with jewelry, handbags, ready-to-wear clothes, sneakers and other accessories.

District Attorney Katz said, “Millions of dollars’ worth of designer merchandise was illegally hauled off airport property by a crew of bandits who used forged cargo shipment receipts to gain access to an importer/exporter warehouse. Keeping our airports in Queens safe and secure is a top priority of my office. Three of the defendants have now been sentenced by the Court for their roles in this brazen heist.”

Port Authority Chief Security Officer Bilich said, “Detectives from the Port Authority Police Department along with FBI Agents, and the Queens DA’s Office worked relentlessly to bring this case to a close. What we experienced throughout the duration of this investigation was a collaborative effort for justice by multiple agencies and we stand committed to the safety and security of passengers and cargo at our airports.”

McArthur, of Coombs Street, in the Springfield Gardens section of Queens, pleaded guilty in June before Queens Supreme Court Justice Gene Lopez to criminal possession of stolen property in the first degree, a B felony. Justice Lopez imposed today’s indeterminate sentence of 4½ to 13½ years in prison.

Co-defendant David Lacarriere, of Columbus Avenue, Manhattan, pleaded guilty in September also to criminal possession of stolen property in the first degree, a B felony, and was also sentenced by Justice Lopez last month to 5½ to 11 years in prison.

Co-defendant Oscar Asencio, 33, of 88<sup>th</sup> Street in Elmhurst, Queens, pleaded guilty in August to criminal possession of stolen property in the third degree, also before Justice Lopez and was sentenced to 3½ to 7 years in prison in August.

According to the charges, on May 17, 2020, forged documents were used to gain access to a cargo importer facility at Kennedy Airport. The theft crew drove away with tracker trailers full of high-end designer merchandise.

Port Authority Police recovered an abandoned trailer used in the heist on May 29, 2020, on 56<sup>th</sup> Road in Maspeth. Inside, police found only shipping pallets, shipping tags, wrapping material and display cases. In an effort to destroy evidence, the trailer was doused with bleach.

DA Katz said the investigative team utilized physical investigative techniques, surveillance, as well as GPS and an extensive video canvassing to track McArthur and his co-conspirators to a non-operational beauty salon believed to be used as a stash house for the stolen goods. Port Authority Police and the JFK FBI Task Force put the location - Candi World Beauty Bar at Guy R. Brewer and 147<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Jamaica - under physical surveillance.

Defendants McArthur, Lacarriere and Asencio, according to Court records, helped protect the stolen merchandise in the stash location. They were all seen on video surveillance carrying bags filled with the stolen property in and out of the building.

Continuing, the DA said, while observing what appeared to be a sale of some of the stolen property on June 3, 2020, the investigative team froze the Candi World location. Spotting the authorities, McArthur and Lacarriere ran from police and sought to hide inside the building. The investigative team executed a Court-authorized search warrant for the location and searched the site. Defendant McArthur surrendered to police and Lacarriere was found inside hiding in a closet. Also, inside the defunct business, police discovered mountains of boxes stuffed with the stolen designer goods - still in the manufacturers' packaging. In all, police recovered more than 3,000 authentic Gucci items - clothes, handbags and other accoutrements. They also recovered just over 1,000 authentic Chanel products - purses, jewelry, sunglasses, shoes and other accessories. The value of the recovered merchandise totaled more than \$2.5 million. Defendants McArthur and Lacarriere admitted to selling off this property from the stash house for cash during their guilty pleas.

DA Katz said this investigation and prosecution uncovered a weakness in the security of our region's air cargo industry. Working with the Port Authority and the Transportation Security Administration, improved safety and security measures have been implemented.

The DA would like to again thank the FBI JFK Task Force consisting of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, NYPD, PAPD, NYSP, HSI, CBP and Federal Air Marshalls with special thanks to Special Agent Regina Lau, Detective Christos Paraskevopoulos and Detective Darryl Nathan for their joint effort that was instrumental in the investigation of the crime leading to the successful prosecution of these defendants.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Nicholas Ciancarelli, Anthony Young, Daniel Tancredo, Joseph Pignataro, Phil Tysowski, Sergio Laboy, Francisco Romero, Katie Lewrey, Luis Santibanez and Tonya McKinley, of the Port Authority Police, under the supervision of Detective Sergeant Thomas Eddings, Sergeant Dewan Maharaj, Detective Lieutenant Jose Alba, Inspector Hugh Johnson, and under the overall supervision of Port Authority Criminal Investigation Bureau Chief Matthew Wilson, PAPD Superintendent Edward Cetnar and Port Authority Police Chief Security Officer John Bilich.

Assistant District Attorney Catherine Kane, Chief of Airport Investigations Unit and Senior Deputy Bureau Chief of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau, prosecuted the case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Speck, also of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief of Major Economic Crimes, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

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