



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

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

Release #41-2023
twitter@QueensDAKatz



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023

CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org

33 REPUTED GANG MEMBERS INDICTED ON MURDER, GUN VIOLENCE CHARGES

Possibly Largest Gang Takedown Ever in Queens

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, joined by NYPD Commissioner Keechant L. Sewell, announced one of the largest gang takedowns in the history of the office, a 151-count indictment brought against 33 alleged gang members, five of whom are charged with murder. The murder charges are for the shooting death of 14-year-old Aamir Griffin, gunned down in 2019 by a reputed gang member who mistook him for a rival; and the slaying of Sean Vance on New Year's Eve 2020. The indictment is the culmination of a nearly three-year investigation into gun and gang violence in and around Baisley Park Houses and nearby communities.

District Attorney Melinda Katz said: "Whether it was a young man playing basketball with friends, a schoolteacher walking his dog, or a mother running out for milk for her children, we have seen law-abiding New Yorkers peacefully going about their business killed by mindless gang gun violence. We must do absolutely everything we can to get illegal firearms off of our streets. It is why the work of the NYPD's Gun Violence Suppression Unit and my Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau is critically important. I commend them for their outstanding work in bringing these extremely violent and dangerous individuals to justice."

Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell said: "The people of New York City are safer because of the meticulous investigation and sustained effort of the NYPD officers and Queens prosecutors involved in this important case. Our pledge is always to achieve justice for crime victims and to hold violent gang members who undermine public safety accountable for their crimes. We will work every day to protect every city neighborhood and I want to thank the Queens district attorney's office and everyone else whose dedication to justice and public safety is reflected in today's indictment."

The defendants were arraigned by Queens Supreme Court Justice Kenneth C. Holder on a 151-count indictment variously charging them with conspiracy in the first, second and fourth degrees, murder in the second degree and additional charges. Justice Holder ordered the defendants, who range in age from 17 to 40, to return to court the second week of May.

At the center of the conspiracy unveiled today is the blood feud between Southeast Queens street gangs Money World and rivals Local Trap Stars and Never Forget Loyalty. While the gang war was set off by a slashing in April 2019, the tensions and violence between the warring factions escalated after the murder of 14-year-old Aamir Griffin in October 2019.

Since Griffin's murder, there have been more than 22 shootings, one fatal. The feud has been fueled through social media and rap videos, with both sides bragging about violent exploits and taunting their rivals, including disrespecting deceased family and friends. Some 34 firearms have been recovered pursuant to search warrants and arrests.

According to the charges:

- On April 16, 2019, at approximately 4:43 p.m., Money World members Tyseam Mcrae and Tymirh Bey-Foster, in the vicinity of 127-04 Guy R. Brewer Blvd., punched and kicked a Trap Stars member, then slashed him across the nape of the neck, causing severe scarring and deformity. The attack sparked the "gang war" between Money World and Local Trap Stars that triggered the investigation leading to the indictment and arrests announced today.

- On October 26, 2019, at approximately 8:00 p.m., Aamir Griffin, 14, was playing basketball at the Baisley Park Houses. From nearby Foch Blvd., Money World member Sean Brown mistook Griffin for a rival gang member and fired three shots from a .380 caliber handgun. One bullet penetrated Griffin's upper chest, pierced both his lungs, and killed him. The shooting leads to an escalation of the violence between the rivals.
- On July 3, 2020, at approximately 11:52 p.m., members of the Local Trap Stars followed a member of the Money World gang exiting the Umbrella Hotel, at 124-18 Queens Blvd. A shootout ensued outside the hotel during which Local Trap Stars member Zaire Rush shot Money World member Tavion Scott in the leg.
- On January 28, 2020, at approximately 2:34 p.m. outside of Martin Van Buren High School, Kobe Ruffin and fellow Trap Stars members approached individuals walking out of the school inquiring whether they were members of the Money World gang. Ruffin identified Money World member Gift Vasquez in the middle of a crowd of students, took out a gun and shot him in the leg.
- On March 14, 2020, at approximately 2:50 p.m., in the vicinity of 164-01 Foch Blvd., Money World members Laquan Hardy King and Sean Brown walked to the middle of the Baisley Park Houses, took out firearms and shot through a playground in the direction of rival gang members. A few hours later, Local Trap Stars members Zaire Rush, Elijah Cowan and Alihosene Kamara drove past the home of Money World member Jokai Coy and opened fire on the house.
- On December 31, 2020, at approximately 7:30 p.m., Sean Vance, 26, was seated in the driver's seat of a BMW double-parked on a busy thoroughfare in Jamaica, in front of 113-08 Sutphin Blvd. A Honda sedan driven by Money World member Justin Harvey pulled up alongside the BMW. Money World member Tymirh Bey-Foster got out of the Honda with a gun and fired eight shots at Vance, striking him each time and killing him. Bey-Foster, Harvey and fellow Money World members Jokai Coy and Joel Lewis planned the murder, mistakenly believing Vance was involved in the shooting of Money World member Sean Brown earlier that day.
- On August 23, 2022, at approximately 8:50 p.m., Ahmel Addison opened fire on the Baisley Park Gardens complex from a car driven by fellow Local Trap Stars member and co-defendant Steven Raphael. Addison hit an innocent bystander and barely missed a seven-year-old.
- On January 21, 2023, at approximately 2:45 p.m., in the vicinity of 119-17 Guy R. Brewer Blvd., Money World member Jokai Coy shot at Local Trap Stars members, including Kobe Ruffin, who was struck in the arm. An innocent bystander walking to a nearby deli was hit in the shoulder.

The joint investigation was conducted by the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau of the Queens County District Attorney's Office, along with Detectives John McHugh and George Bodenmiller, Sergeant Jeff Liu and Lieutenant Jonathon Zocchia of the New York Police Department's Violence Reduction Task Force, under the supervision of Captain Ryan Gillis and Deputy Chief Jason Savino, Commanding Officer of the NYPD's Gun Violence Suppression Division; Detectives Carlos Segovia and Daniel Sjoberg of the New York Police Department's Queens South Violent Crime Squad, under the supervision of Sergeant Matthew Lewis and Captain Robert D'Andrea; as well as Detectives James Richardson and Christopher Cruzado, under the supervision of Lieutenant Sean Finnegan, Commanding Officer of the 113 Detective Squad; and Det. Nicholas Sofokles, under the supervision of Lieutenant William Negus, Commanding Officer of the Queens County District Attorney's Squad under the supervision of Deputy Chief Jerry O'Sullivan Commanding Officer of Detective Borough Queens South and the overall supervision of New York City Police Department Chief of Detectives James W. Essig.

Assistant District Attorney Barry Frankenstein, Deputy Chief of the District Attorney's Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau along with Assistant District Attorneys Diana Schioppi and Charles Dunn are prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Jonathan Sennett, Bureau Chief, Michelle E. Goldstein, Senior Deputy Chief and Phillip Anderson, Deputy Chief, and under the overall supervision of Senior Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

ADDENDUM

MEMBERS OF MONEYWORLD AND ASSOCIATES

TYMIRH BEY-FOSTER, 20, 129-04 160 Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, hindering prosecution in the first degree, two counts of murder in the second degree, eight counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, three counts of attempted murder in the second degree, assault in the first degree, two counts of assault in the second degree, criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree, three counts of criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, attempted assault in the first degree and two counts of reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Bey-Foster faces 25 years to life in prison.

DAFINA BEY, 40, of 129-04 160th Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second degree. If convicted, Bey faces 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison.

SEAN BROWN, 20, of 109-53 153rd Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second degree, conspiracy in the fourth degree, two counts of murder in the second degree, four counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Brown faces 25 years to life in prison.

TERENCE BURT, 22, of 109-65 142nd Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the first and second degree, conspiracy in the fourth degree, attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, attempted assault in the first degree, four counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, assault in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Burt faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

JOKAI COY, 18, 164-42 108th Drive, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second degree and fourth degree, two counts of murder in the second degree, 16 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, five counts of attempted murder in the second degree, three counts of criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, attempted assault in the first degree, three counts of assault in the second degree and three counts of reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Coy faces 25 years to life in prison.

SHAUN ELLIOT, 18, of 91-23 Park Lane S, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, two counts of attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of attempted assault in the first degree, two counts of assault in the second degree, two counts of reckless endangerment in the first degree, three counts of criminal use of a firearm in the first degree and six counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. If convicted, Elliot faces 25 years in prison for each attempted murder charge.

LAQUAN HARDY-KING, 20, of 163-49 130th Avenue, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree. If convicted Hardy-King faces 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison.

JUSTIN HARVEY, 20, of 5 Commercial Street, Brooklyn. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, two counts of murder in the second degree, 12 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, two counts of reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, the defendant faces 25 years to life in prison.

JOEL LEWIS, 19, of 116-29 168th Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, two counts of murder in the second degree, 16 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, attempted assault in the first degree, assault in the second degree and three counts of reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, the defendant faces 25 years to life in prison.

DIJON MARQUIS, 19, of 153-14 134th Avenue, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second degree and fourth degree, attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, attempted assault in the first degree, six counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, assault in the second degree and two counts of reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Marquis faces 25 years in prison.

TYSEAM MCRAE, 21, of 123-24 152nd Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, attempted murder in the second degree, assault in the first and second degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree. If convicted, McRae faces 25 years in prison.

TAVION SCOTT, 20, of 96-38 202nd Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, two counts of attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, attempted assault in the first degree, four counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, assault in the second degree and two counts reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Scott faces 25 years on each attempt murder.

JADYN SKINNER, 18, of 114-19 198th Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, attempted assault in the first degree, 10 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, assault in the second degree and two counts of reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Skinner faces 25 years in prison for each attempted murder charge.

GIFT VASQUEZ, 19, 91-24 Park Lane S, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, four counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Vasquez faces 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison.

MEMBERS OF THE TRAP STARS AND ASSOCIATES

AHMEL ADDISON, 20, of 18-52 Bay Ridge Parkway, Brooklyn. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, two counts of attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of robbery in the first degree, assault in the first degree, two counts of criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, six counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, two counts of assault in the second degree, two counts of reckless endangerment in the first degree and attempted assault in the first degree. If convicted, Addison faces 25 years in prison on each attempted murder charge.

JARROD BURT, 19, of 644 Milby Drive, Chesapeake, VA. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree. If convicted, Burt faces 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison.

ELIJAH COWAN, 19, of 116-80 Guy R. Brewer Blvd., Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the fourth degree, two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, reckless endangerment in the first degree and criminal possession of stolen property in the fifth degree. If convicted, Cowan faces 15 years in prison.

JAHNOI DAWKINS, 19, of 30-20 Surf Avenue, Brooklyn. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the fourth degree, two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Dawkins faces 15 years in prison.

CHANCE GOODE, 20, of 112-44 Dillon Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, two counts of attempted murder in the second degree, three counts of criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, six counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree and three counts of reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Goode faces 25 years in prison on each attempted murder charge.

CAOLYNN GRIFFIN, 20, of 116-40 Guy R. Brewer Blvd., Queens. The defendant is charged with two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. If convicted, Griffin faces 15 years in prison.

EVEKIEL JOHNSON, 22, of 116-80 Guy R. Brewer Blvd., Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the fourth degree and two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. If convicted, Johnson faces 15 years in prison.

KHADEL JOHNSON, 20, of 144-24 176th Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the fourth degree. If convicted, Johnson faces 1 to 3 years in prison.

ALIHOSENE KAMARA, 20, of 126-40 149th Street, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, attempted murder in the second degree, criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, attempted assault in the first degree, four counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, assault in the second degree, two counts of reckless endangerment in the first degree, criminal possession of stolen property in the fifth degree, attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of robbery in the first degree, assault in the first degree, criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, assault in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Kamara faces 25 years on each attempted murder charge.

SHERMEL MCCALLUM, 18, of 164-01 Foch Blvd., Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the fourth degree. If convicted, McCallum faces 1 1/3 to 4 years in prison.

LENNY NAZON, 21, of 217-82 Hempstead Avenue, Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second degree. If convicted, Nazon faces 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison.

MALACHI PARHAM, 21, of 2203 Yorkhills Drive, Charlotte, NC. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second degree and fourth degree. If convicted, Parham faces 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison.

STEVEN RAPHAEL, 29, of 838 Rome Street, Elmont, NY. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, attempted murder in the second degree, attempted assault in the first degree, two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, assault in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Raphael faces 25 years in prison.

KINGSLEY RUFFIN, 22, of 163-11 Foch Blvd., Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the fourth degree. If convicted, Ruffin faces 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison.

KOBE RUFFIN, 19, of 163-11 Foch Blvd., Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, attempted murder in the second degree, criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, attempted assault in the first degree, two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, assault in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, he faces 25 years in prison.

ZAIRE RUSH, 18, of 163-11 Foch Blvd., Queens. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, reckless endangerment in the first degree and criminal possession of stolen property in the fifth degree. If convicted, Rush faces 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison.

ANTHONY THOMPSON, 18, of 309 MLK Drive, Jersey City, NY. The defendant is charged with conspiracy in the second and fourth degree, attempted murder in the second degree, criminal use of a firearm in the first degree, attempted assault in the first degree, two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, assault in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first degree. If convicted, Thompson faces 25 years in prison.

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

#

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

