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BRONX MAN CHARGED WITH MURDER IN SMOKE SHOP SHOOTING

Defendant Faces Up to 25 Years to Life in Prison

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Albert Edwards was arraigned on charges of murder, robbery and weapon possession in the March 18 robbery of a Richmond Hill smoke shop during which a 20-year-old employee was fatally shot.

District Attorney Katz said: "A young man lost his life in a senseless act of gun violence. The defendant will be held responsible for the charges against him."

Edwards, 24, of Jackson Avenue, the Bronx, was arraigned last night on a complaint charging him with murder in the second degree, two counts of robbery in the first degree and two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. Judge Diego Freire ordered the defendant to return to court on August 16. If convicted, Edwards faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

According to the charges:

- On March 18, between approximately 12:10 p.m. and 12:16 p.m., video surveillance footage shows Edwards driving a vehicle owned by ZipCar up to The Plug smoke shop at 109-27 Jamaica Avenue.
- Three men got out of the car and went into the smoke shop where they displayed a loaded gun and removed property. One of the men shot store employee Darryus Clarke, 20 of Jamaica, in the torso. The three men then ran back to the car, which sped away.
- Clarke was taken to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead.
- The three other assailants have not been apprehended.

The investigation was conducted by NYPD Detective Michael Klein of the 102nd Detective Squad and Detective Nicholas Perez of Queens South Homicide.

Assistant District Attorney Antonio Vittiglio of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau is prosecuting the case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Kristin Papadopoulos, Section Chief, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys John W. Kosinski, Bureau Chief, Peter McCormack III, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, Karen Ross, Deputy Bureau Chief, and Assistant District Attorney Marilyn Filingeri, Supervisor, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

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.

