Office of the **Special Narcotics Prosecutor** for the **City of New York**

2017 Annual Report

Message from the Special Narcotics Prosecutor

For the seventh consecutive year, the toll exacted by the epidemic of drug addiction in New York City set a tragic record. More New Yorkers died from overdosing on drugs last year than ever before. The lethal opioid fentanyl is the primary reason.

Fentanyl is a man-made drug 50 times as powerful as heroin. Because it costs a fraction of the price of heroin, street dealers mix it into more expensive narcotics to boost profits. In New York City, anyone looking to buy heroin, cocaine or illegal pills is at great risk of unknowingly purchasing fentanyl.

A dose of pure fentanyl the size of about four grains of salt is enough to kill an average adult, sometimes so quickly that there is no time to call for help or revive a victim with naloxone (Narcan), an antidote to overdose.

Manufactured in China, fentanyl is transported to the United States via Mexican cartels, Canadian distributors or Internet sales. Our Office has responded powerfully:

Our investigations took 491 pounds of pure fentanyl off the street, a 1300% increase over the prior year. The combined amount of heroin and fentanyl seized increased by 54%.

We are strategically targeting major narcotics distributors. As a result, the number of wiretaps we obtained in 2017 increased by 44%, as we used the most effective tools to trace the lethal drugs back to their source.

To warn the public of fentanyl's dangers and saturation in the city's street drug market, we developed and launched a campaign consisting of a professionally produced video and social media posts. The video appeared on television and in local movie theaters, as well as on digital platforms. A series of animated social media posts further illustrated facts about fentanyl, a sampling of which appears on the cover of this report.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan delivered the keynote for the U.S. Customs & Border Protection Fentanyl Summit.

By partnering with rehabilitative treatment professionals and academic researchers, we have worked to increase the number of people accessing drug treatment and the availability of effective programs.

The loss of so many lives to addiction despite our best efforts has become unbearable. We will work tirelessly to cut off the supply of deadly drugs pouring into our city, which all agree is essential to reducing overdose deaths. And we continue to look for new approaches to turn the corner on this crisis.

Bridget G. Brennan
Special Narcotics Prosecutor

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About the Office

A local prosecutors' office with citywide jurisdiction, the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor (SNP) is responsible for felony narcotics investigations and prosecutions in the five boroughs of New York City. Founded in 1971, it is the only agency of its kind in the United States.

Created in response to a burgeoning heroin epidemic and spike in violent crime, SNP was granted broad authority under New York State Judiciary Laws to root out sophisticated narcotics trafficking organizations and track offenders across traditional jurisdictional boundaries. The Special Narcotics Prosecutor is appointed by the city's five District Attorneys, who also assign Assistant District Attorneys to serve in SNP. Since its inception, SNP has worked closely with local, state and federal law enforcement partners.

Renowned for its wiretap investigations, SNP is a leader in the use of cutting-edge electronic technology to identify and pursue members of criminal enterprises from street-level dealers to top suppliers. In recent years, SNP has applied its expertise to confronting the explosion of heroin and fentanyl trafficking, prescription drug diversion and the prosecution of violent gangs. The office is also committed to reducing demand for narcotics by raising public awareness and facilitating treatment for addicted offenders.

The first Special Narcotics Prosecutor, Frank Rogers, was appointed in January 1972. He was succeeded by Hon. Sterling Johnson, Jr., who headed SNP for 16 years before becoming a federal judge in the Eastern District of New York. Robert H. Silbering was named the Special Narcotics Prosecutor in 1992.

On May 1, 1998, Bridget G. Brennan was appointed Special Narcotics Prosecutor by the city's five District Attorneys. Under her direction, the office has developed innovative strategies to stem the flow of drugs into the city and target emerging problems. Ms. Brennan established the Heroin Interdiction Team (HIT), the Digital Forensic Services Unit, the Prescription Drug Investigation Unit (PDIU), the Narcotics Gang Unit and the Money Laundering and Financial Investigation Unit.

Located at 80 Centre Street in lower Manhattan, the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office brings cases in New York County Supreme Court.

New York City's District Attorneys

The five District Attorneys appoint the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, assign Assistant District Attorneys to the office and oversee the office's work. The only agency of its kind in the nation, SNP is a model of collaboration and effective partnerships. In the midst of the current heroin crisis, the District Attorneys formally reaffirmed their support for SNP in an agreement that recognizes the importance of the office's leadership in citywide narcotics prosecutions.

Office of the Bronx District Attorney
District Attorney
Darcel D. Clark

The New York County District Attorney's Office
District Attorney
Cyrus R. Vance, Jr.

The Brooklyn District Attorney's Office
District Attorney
Eric Gonzalez

Queens County District Attorney's Office
District Attorney
Richard A. Brown

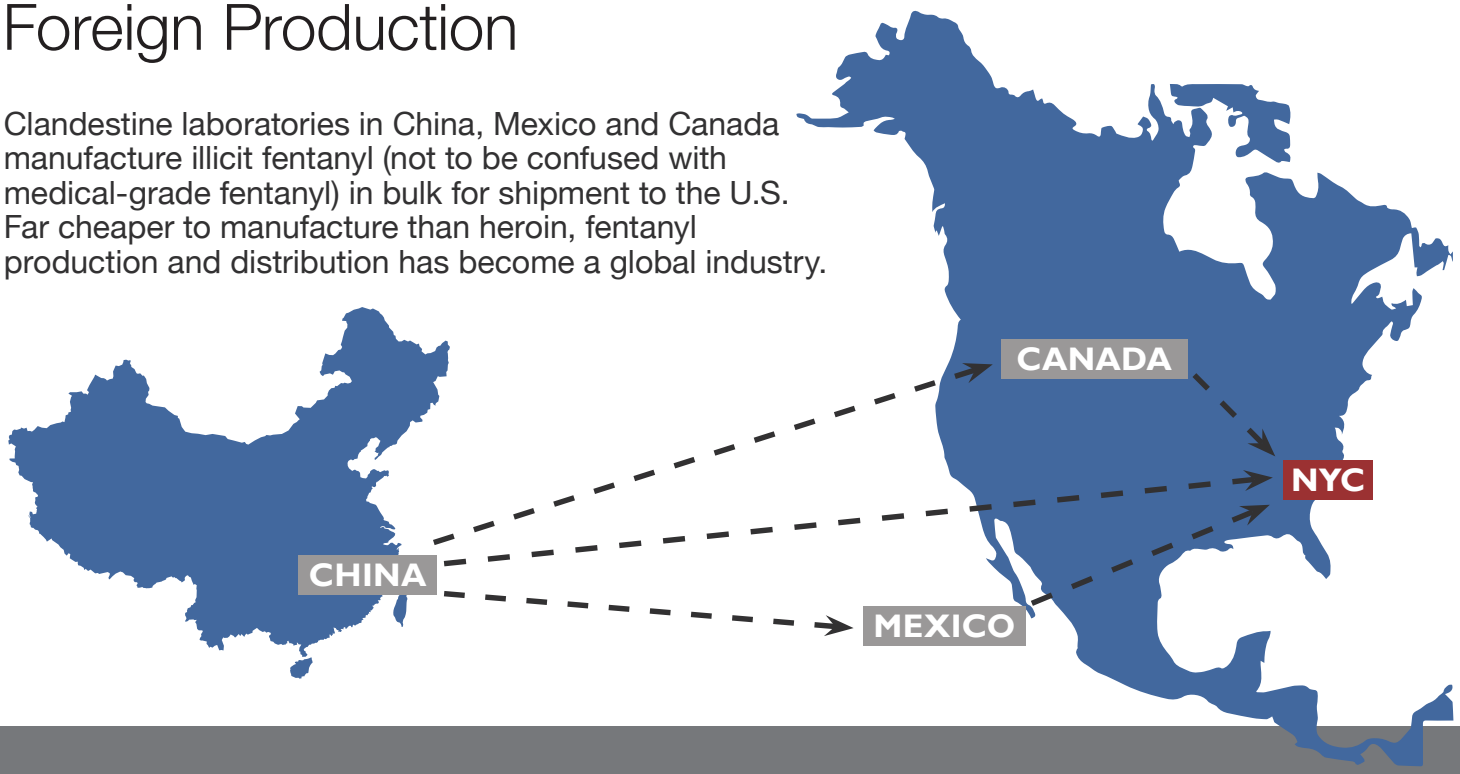
Office of the District Attorney Richmond County
District Attorney
Michael E. McMahon

WHAT IS FENTANYL?

A synthetic opioid, fentanyl is up to 50 times more potent than heroin and is saturating New York City's black market with deadly consequences. Illicit fentanyl is driving the record spike in overdose deaths.

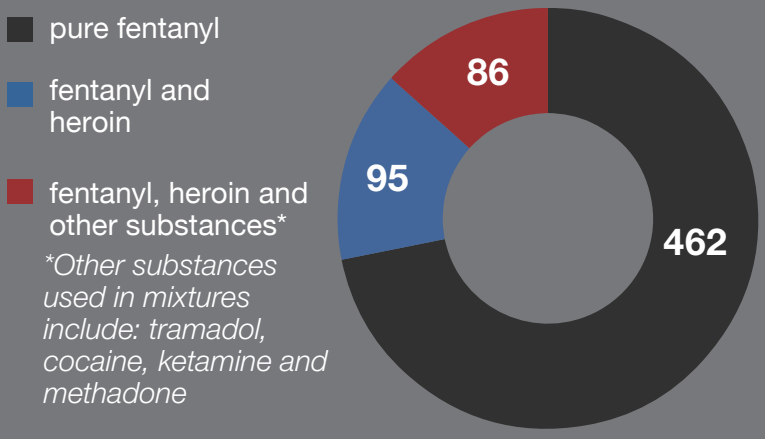
Foreign Production

Clandestine laboratories in China, Mexico and Canada manufacture illicit fentanyl (not to be confused with medical-grade fentanyl) in bulk for shipment to the U.S. Far cheaper to manufacture than heroin, fentanyl production and distribution has become a global industry.



WHY IT IS SOLD

SNP Fentanyl Seizures by Type in 2017 (in pounds)



**Other substances used in mixtures include: tramadol, cocaine, ketamine and methadone*

Illicit Supply

To boost profits, narcotics suppliers commonly mix cheaply produced fentanyl with more expensive substances like heroin and cocaine, or other synthetic drugs. Counterfeit oxycodone and Xanax pills also frequently contain fentanyl. Street-level drug dealers may be unaware of what they are selling, and buyers may be unaware of what they are buying. The unpredictability of illicit street drugs increases risk factors and puts users in grave danger.

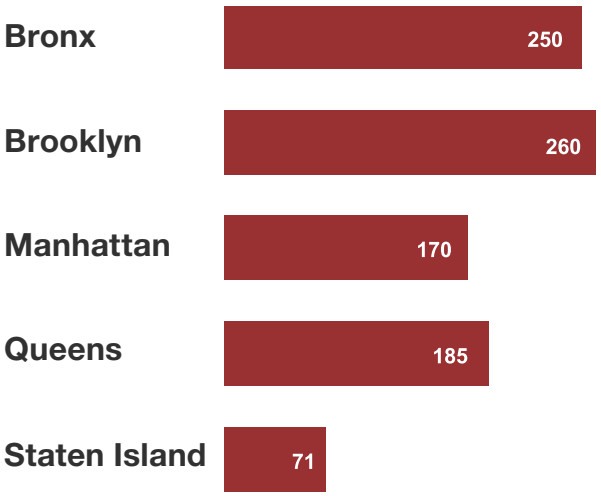
WHY IT IS SO DEADLY

Every 7 hours someone in NYC fatally overdoses.

Fentanyl is involved in half of all fatal overdoses in New York City. A minuscule amount can cause an overdose. Once an overdose happens, the drug rapidly suppresses both breathing and heartbeat, leading to loss of consciousness, respiratory arrest and even death.

- Many users do not know they are taking fentanyl
- A dose the size of a few grains of salt can be lethal
- Fentanyl is fast-acting and quickly overcomes victims
- Overdose reversal drugs are less effective
- Brain damage can result from non-fatal overdoses

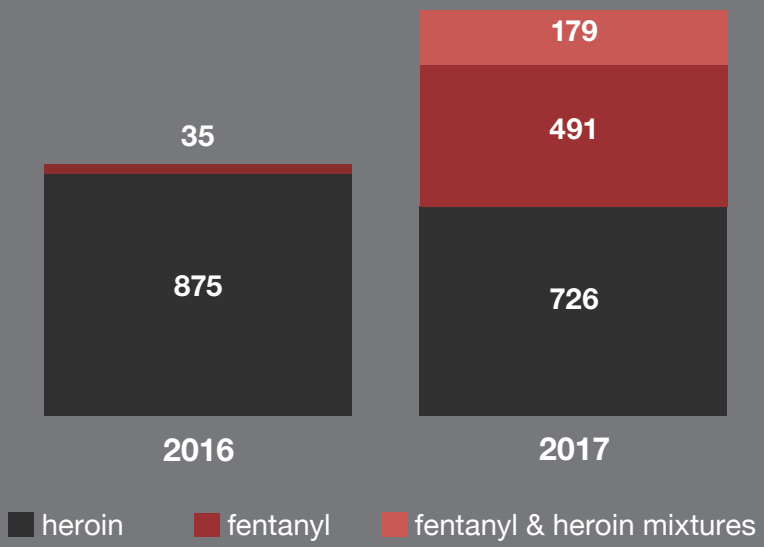
936 Confirmed Overdose Deaths in NYC January to September 2017*



*by borough of residence

HOW WE CAN SUCCEED

SNP Seizures of Fentanyl, Heroin and Mixtures (in pounds)



Multi-Faceted Strategy

Reduce Supply: Improve law enforcement coordination and strategic targeting

Treatment: Broaden outreach by trained professionals to reach diverse demographics

Harm Reduction: Expand naloxone distribution and peer counseling programs

Prevention: Informational campaigns to reach potential users before substance abuse begins

Trends

Opioid Crisis: Four-Pronged Strategy

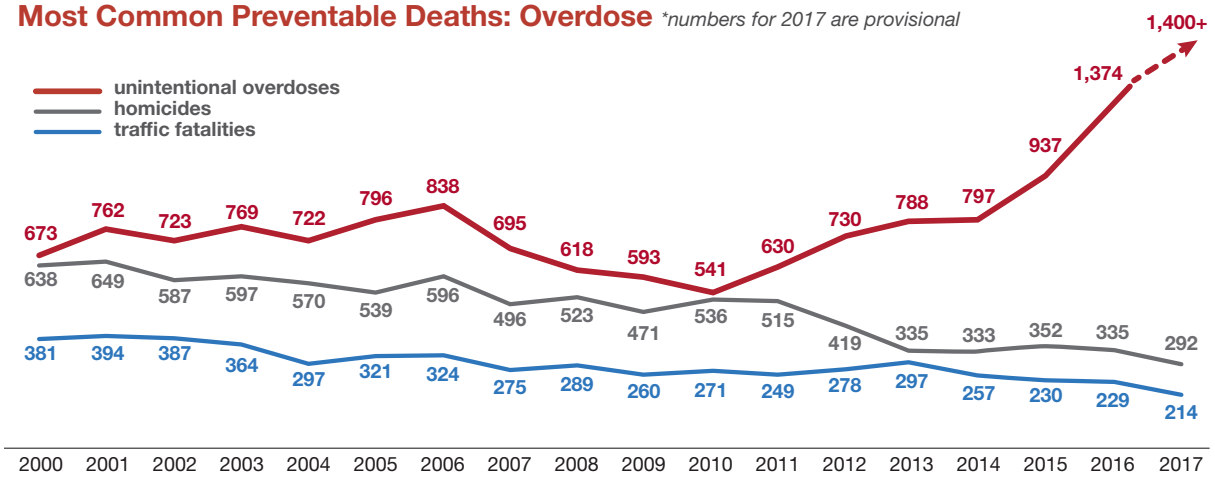
An effective strategy must balance four key components	
Reduce Supply	Improve law enforcement coordination and strategic targeting
Treatment	Broaden outreach by trained professionals to reach diverse demographics
Harm Reduction	Expand naloxone distribution and peer counseling programs
Prevention	Informational campaigns to reach potential users before substance abuse begins

In New York City, fatal overdoses increased for a seventh consecutive year, from 541 in 2010 to a projected total of more than 1,400 in 2017. Thousands more have suffered non-fatal overdoses. While the sharp rate of increase seen in recent years appears to be leveling off, the city is still in the throes of an historic epidemic. Meanwhile, New York City's murder rate is on par with the 1950s and traffic fatalities are at their lowest level since data was first compiled. Nationally, over 64,000 people died from drug overdoses in 2016—more than the total number of Americans who died during the Vietnam War. And according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), emergency department visits due to suspected opioid overdoses climbed 30% between July of 2016 and September of 2017, to a new high of 142,557.

SNP is at the forefront of efforts to address this crisis in New York City and is committed to saving lives by developing innovative solutions in collaboration with partners in public safety, public health, the private sector and local communities.

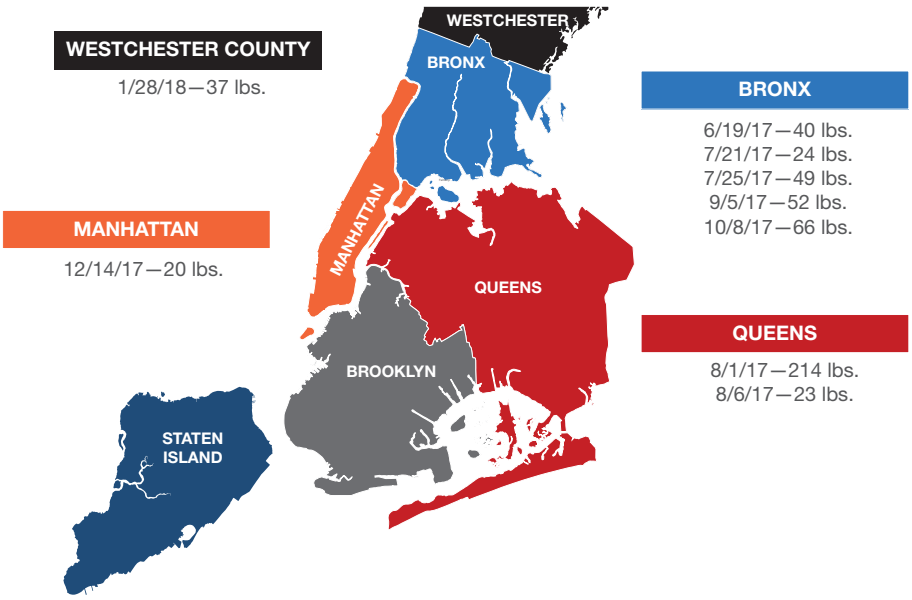
As a prosecutorial agency, the core mission of SNP is prevention through supply reduction. Seismic shifts in the black market for narcotics in New York City have made street drugs more deadly and unpredictable than ever before due to the presence of illicit fentanyl, a synthetic opioid 50 times stronger than heroin, which is flooding into New York City. SNP's first priority is to prevent overdose and addiction by seeking to cut off the narcotics supply at the highest level possible and to disrupt street markets across the city. The office is also dedicated to enhancing the effectiveness of drug treatment and developing prevention campaigns targeting potential new users before addiction takes hold.

Most Common Preventable Deaths: Overdose **numbers for 2017 are provisional*



Citywide Strategic Plan

Fentanyl Seizures Over 20 Pounds



A stunning 1300% more pure fentanyl was recovered in SNP investigations in 2017 than in 2016. Working with partners in the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the New York City Police Department (NYPD), SNP recovered over 223 kilograms or 491 pounds of pure fentanyl citywide in 2017 as compared to 16 kilograms or 35 pounds in 2016. This is in addition to 81 kilograms or 179 pounds of fentanyl mixed with heroin and/or other substances, for a total of 670 pounds of narcotics containing fentanyl seized as a result of SNP investigations.

Fentanyl is frequently mixed with other opioids, such as heroin and the synthetic drug tramadol. It is also mixed with non-opioids, such as cocaine and the tranquilizer ketamine, or pressed into counterfeit pills that are marketed as oxycodone or Xanax (a benzodiazepine prescribed for treating anxiety). Fentanyl poses an even greater danger to those users who do not have a tolerance for opioids.

Law enforcement officers put themselves in harm's way when handling potentially lethal narcotics. The DEA and the NYPD no longer permit agents and officers to conduct field tests that could inadvertently lead to transdermal or airborne contact with fentanyl. As a result, it is necessary for prosecutors to wait for the results of laboratory analysis to confirm the type of substances seized. More often than not, analysis of SNP's major seizures reveals the presence of fentanyl.

Supply Reduction

Recent wiretap investigations highlight the link between international traffickers and this surge in fentanyl. Capitalizing on the American appetite for opioids, groups in Mexico and China have ramped up production of illicit fentanyl. New York City serves as a regional hub of distribution and the city's narcotic supply reflects this trend. Illicit narcotics travel to the city over land, by air and by ship. Working with law enforcement partners, SNP identifies and prosecutes emissaries for international cartels who travel to the U.S. to oversee major drug and money laundering transactions. These investigations have led to record seizures of heroin and fentanyl.

Mexican Kingpin Indicted as Supplier of Fentanyl to NYC

SNP brought the top narcotics charge of Operating as a Major Trafficker against an alleged heroin and fentanyl supplier linked to the Sinaloa Cartel in Mexico. Francisco Quiroz-Zamora is accused of orchestrating the delivery and sale of large shipments of fentanyl in New York City from his base in San José del Cabo, including a combined 20 kilograms of fentanyl (44 pounds) seized at a Central Park West apartment and the Umbrella Hotel in the Bronx. Quiroz-Zamora was arrested at Penn Station as he arrived in New York City to collect an alleged drug payment from an undercover officer with the DEA NY Division's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force.

Record Fentanyl Seizure in Kew Gardens

In a record large seizure, agents and officers with the DEA New Jersey Division and the NYPD recovered 97 kilograms of narcotics (over 210 pounds) from an apartment in Kew Gardens, Queens, including 64 kilograms of fentanyl, 22 kilograms of fentanyl mixed with other substances, and quantities of heroin and cocaine. Agents observed a suspected narcotics transaction at a New Jersey Walmart and tracked a couple involved in the alleged sale to Queens. The defendants proved to be married Mexican nationals and were temporarily staying in the apartment where the narcotics were seized. The street value was estimated at over $30 million.

Record seizure of fentanyl, as well as heroin and cocaine, from an apartment in Kew Gardens

Emerging Trend Analysis

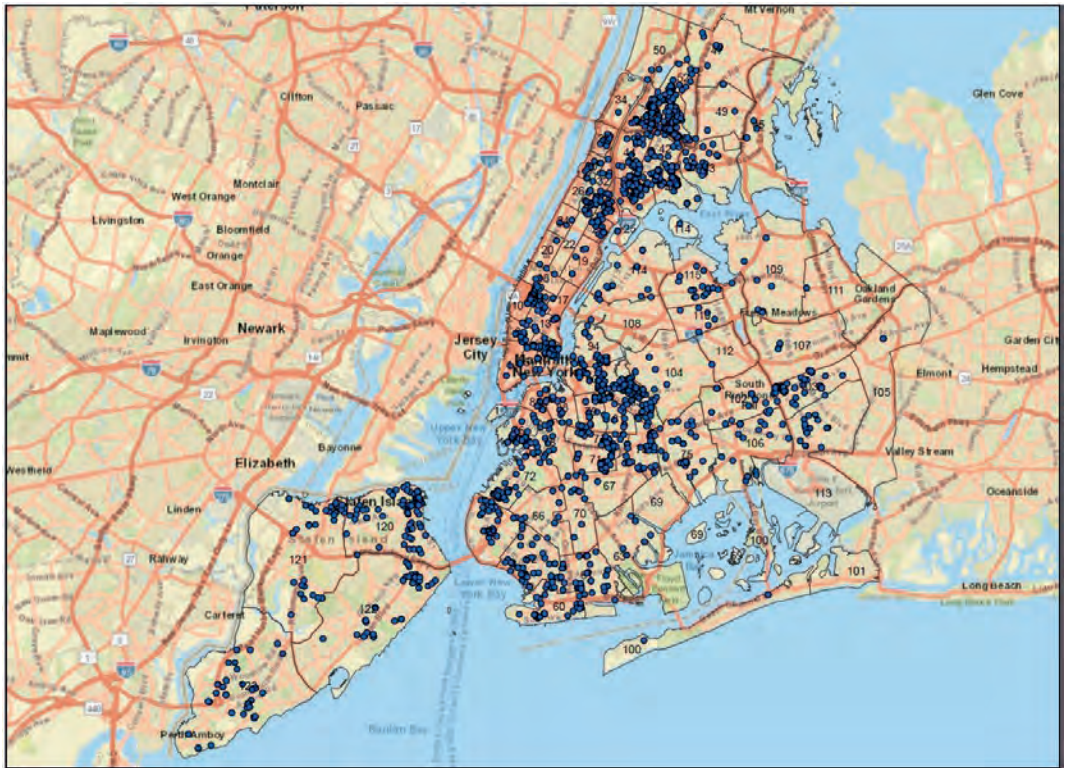
SNP and the NYPD are working together to examine narcotics data from a broad citywide perspective in order to identify patterns and larger trends. Information is gleaned from laboratory reports, overdose data, arrests, seizures and community complaints. A detailed understanding of citywide trends and patterns allows SNP to effectively synchronize its work with the five District Attorneys' offices and make the best use of available resources.

This analysis has led to the identification of several high volume drug markets that attract a significant percentage of drug buyers from outside the borough where they are located. By identifying those citywide hubs, law enforcement gains a better understanding of how narcotics move across boroughs and how to focus resources on those drug markets with an outsized influence on the supply of narcotics throughout the city.

Similarly, this analysis sheds light on the presence of fentanyl "hotspots" or drug markets across the city where there appears to be a high incidence of fentanyl present in the drugs sold. By identifying and focusing on these fentanyl hotspots, SNP is able to develop a better understanding of how fentanyl is being mixed, packaged, distributed and sold throughout the city and what impact those hotspots have on overdose rates.

SNP also facilitates early identification of emerging distribution points and focuses on those areas of the city with a high incidence of narcotics seizures of significant weight. By tracking and analyzing large seizures throughout the city on an ongoing basis, the office is able to quickly identify geographical areas which are emerging as significant distribution points.

2016–2017 Fentanyl Hot Spot Arrest Locations



Note: Data is based on arrests of defendants who have 2 + drug arrests involving fentanyl

Overdose Death Investigations

In response to overdose deaths, SNP and law enforcement partners work to identify sources of supply through wiretaps, surveillance and other investigative tools. The primary goal of these investigations is to disrupt the supply of lethal narcotics.

Bridget G. Brennan discussed an investigation involving two overdose deaths during a televised interview.

A citywide narcotics supplier and 19 others were charged as a result of the investigation into fentanyl-related deaths.

Investigators also seek to determine whether or not an individual who sold a deadly dose was aware of the nature of the substance. Such knowledge can lead to manslaughter charges when appropriate.

If a source of supply is identified, but there is insufficient proof to charge manslaughter, drug dealers can still be prosecuted for the sale of narcotics. Fentanyl is so thoroughly mixed into the drug supply that dealers sometimes do not know what they are selling, leaving customers uninformed and at grave risk of death. Because fentanyl is approximately 50 times stronger than heroin—with just two to three milligrams comprising a lethal dose—using street drugs is akin to playing Russian roulette.

Sales of lethal fentanyl yield substantial profits for drug traffickers. In one recent case, police recovered over $600,000 cash and a Lamborghini from the Long Island City home of a major narcotics supplier. The investigation involved two overdose deaths in Brooklyn and Queens.

The opioid epidemic cuts across all demographics. The Bronx continues to be the borough with the highest number of overdose deaths, followed by Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island. Neighborhoods with the highest rate of overdose death are located in the Bronx and Staten Island.

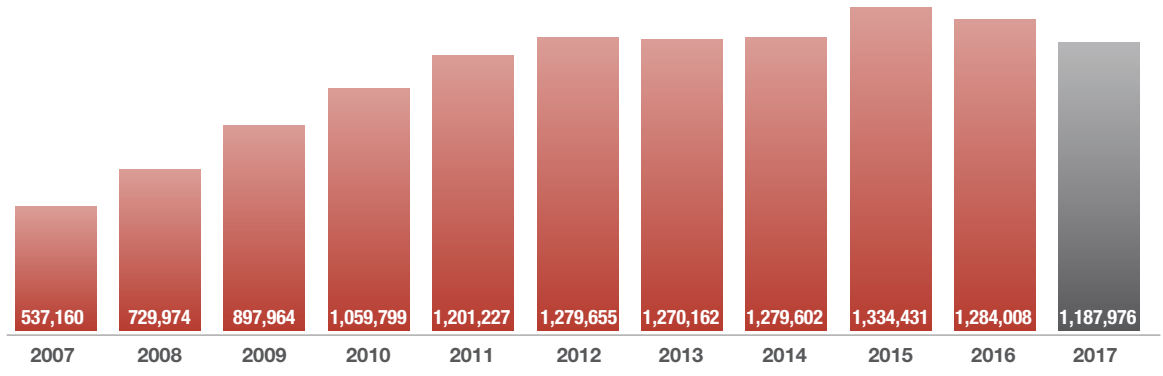
Prescription Opioids as Gateway

The majority of new heroin users report first developing an addiction to prescription opioid pills. Measurable progress has been made as a result of tighter controls on prescriptions through the implementation of I-STOP/PMP, New York State's Internet System for Tracking Over-Prescribing—Prescription Monitoring Program, as well as law enforcement initiatives and improved education for doctors and patients. Last year, New York City residents filled 7.5% fewer prescriptions for oxycodone, the prescription painkiller most commonly sold on the black market, the lowest number since 2010.

The flow of prescription drugs onto the black market is an important focus for SNP, which investigates and prosecutes trafficking rings and corrupt medical professionals who sell prescriptions for cash. In 2017, three Brooklyn pill mills were shuttered as a result of a long-term probe by SNP's Prescription Drug Investigation Unit, DEA, the city's Department of Investigation (DOI) and other partners. Indictments charged 13 individuals in schemes to defraud Medicaid and Medicare of millions of dollars, illegal sales of prescriptions for over 6.3 million opioid painkillers and money laundering. Accused mastermind Dr. Lazar Feygin was one of the state's top Medicaid billers. The indictments allege that Feygin and another doctor orchestrated the lucrative scheme with assistance from medical practitioners, staff and a former New York State assemblyman employed at Quality Laboratory Services. Complicit doctors employed at the clinics allegedly prescribed oxycodone for no legitimate medical purposes. In exchange, patients underwent unnecessary medical tests and procedures that were billed to Medicare and Medicaid. At the height of the scheme, the clinics conducted more than 1,600 office visits per month.

Bridget G. Brennan announced a major pill mill investigation at a press conference at DEA New York Division Headquarters.

Oxycodone Prescriptions Filled by NYC Residents: 2007–2017



Cocaine Surge

Cocaine use is becoming more prevalent across the U.S. and in New York City. In June of 2017, DOHMH issued a public warning that the city's cocaine supply may be laced with fentanyl. Of the more than 1,300 fatal drug overdoses that occurred in 2016, 37% involved both cocaine and fentanyl (without the presence of heroin).

Meanwhile, SNP has observed a sharp increase in the amount of cocaine being recovered in its investigations over the past two years. Seizures had plummeted from over 1,000 pounds in 2010 to 437 pounds—or less than half—in 2015. In 2016, the amount of cocaine seized in SNP cases spiked back up to 727—66% more—and last year SNP recovered 782 pounds. Kilogram quantities of cocaine are increasingly being found alongside fentanyl, heroin and other synthetic opioids on the wholesale level. A recent investigation uncovered a multi-million dollar cocaine trafficking operation based at 83rd Street and Columbus Avenue in Manhattan's Upper West Side. Multiple kilograms of cocaine, marijuana and $270,000 cash were seized.

Cocaine marked with a crown seized from a supplier on the Upper West Side.

Treatment and Prevention

Various outreach efforts are underway in New York City to assist people with substance use disorders and save lives. The Mayor's Office and DOHMH embrace a multifaceted approach through the HealingNYC initiative.

Significant resources have been dedicated to harm reduction strategies, such as distribution of the overdose reversal drug naloxone. First responders with EMS and the NYPD administered thousands of doses.

However, the overall number of people entering drug treatment programs has declined during the opioid epidemic. The city's District Attorneys are implementing pre-arraignment diversion programs to connect eligible defendants to peer counselors and treatment services in lieu of facing prosecution.

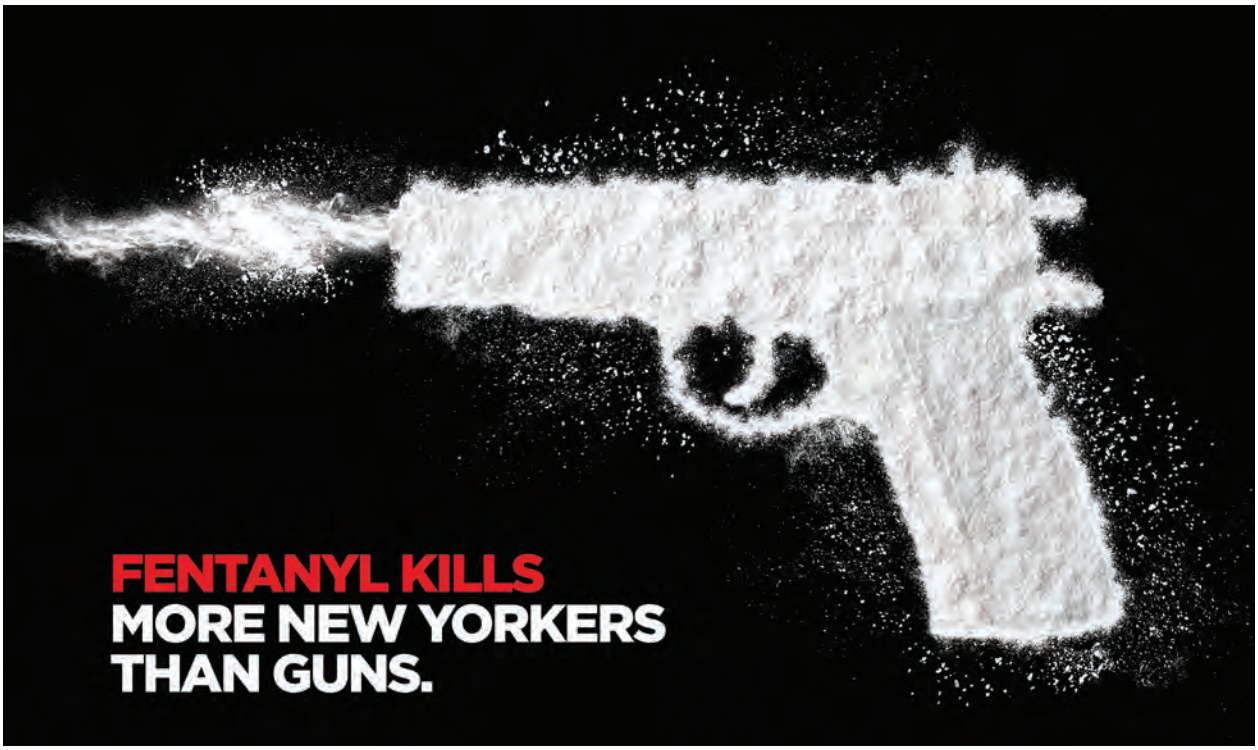
Manhattan DA Cyrus R. Vance, Jr. and Bridget G. Brennan participated in City & State's Healthy NY Summit.

SNP Public Service Announcements

SNP advocates for education and prevention efforts targeting potential drug users. In 2017, SNP developed a public service campaign to highlight the increased presence of fentanyl in the city's illicit drug market. With assistance from advertising industry professionals, the office released a video and two-dozen originally designed social media posts. The video depicts how fentanyl dealers sometimes wear masks to protect themselves, while unsuspecting overdose victims require an oxygen mask. It appeared on television, in movie theaters, and on social media platforms. For more information, visit fentanylkills.nyc.

Academic Studies

SNP partnered with the District Attorneys for Staten Island and the Bronx to commission capstone studies by Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) and Mailman School of Public Health. Dedicated teams of graduate students and seasoned faculty members examined the impact of the opioid epidemic on communities and assessed treatment options and prevention efforts. An academic report entitled "Staten Island Needs Assessment: Opioid Addiction Prevention and Treatment Systems of Care" was published in 2017. The Bronx capstone project is due for completion in 2018.



An SNP social media campaign alerted the public to the dangers of fentanyl.

SNP Outreach

Sharing Expertise with Local and International Partners

A prosecutor representing the Ministry of Justice of Korea discussed legal policies and procedures with SNP staff.

Assistant District Attorney Andres Torres presented at an American Bar Association training in the District of Callao, Peru.

DEA New York Division hosted its annual Black History Month Program.

Bridget G. Brennan and other speakers with members of Manhattan Community Board 10's Senior Task Force.

SNP hosted a DAASNY Legislative Committee meeting.

Professional Recognition

The New York County Lawyers Association celebrated Outstanding Women in the Legal Profession at its 103rd Annual Dinner.

Left: Bridget G. Brennan received a Lifetime Achievement award from the National Police Defense Foundation.

Bottom Left: The Federal Drug Agents' Foundation honored Chief Investigator William Cook (left) and SNP's Investigators Unit.

Below: Nigel I. Farinha, Co-Chief of SNP's Narcotics Gang Unit, received the Thomas E. Dewey Medal from the New York City Bar Association.

Community Initiatives

Director of Community Outreach Calvin Solomon coordinates with law enforcement partners and community groups.

SNP seeks to make a positive imprint on communities where major drug enforcement actions have occurred by partnering with the Police Athletic League (PAL) and the District Attorneys' offices to support youth programs. Last year, with financial support from SNP, PAL launched the After School Filmmaking Project at the PAL Wynn Center in Brooklyn. Through the project, youth learn about a wide range of topics related to filmmaking, including the fundamentals of film and video and the steps of narrative filmmaking from pre-production to post-production, culminating in an "Exploring Your World through Cinema" student film festival. The Filmmaking Project is the result of collaboration between SNP, the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office, PAL, the NYPD, NYCHA and Grand St. Settlement, a nonprofit organization that helps administer the Roosevelt Houses Community Center. Funding was derived from SNP's Safe Neighborhood Initiative.

In March 2017, a long-term investigation into drug trafficking in the vicinity of the nearby Roosevelt Houses resulted in the indictment and arrest of 11 different individuals. In addition to drug trafficking, the defendants were charged in connection with four firearms and with plotting a home-invasion robbery in Rochester, NY.

A ribbon cutting ceremony kicked off the PAL Filmmaking Project at the Wynn Center in Brooklyn.

Investigation Division

2017 SNP WIRETAP ACTIVITY	
Amendment	70
Extension	156
Original	188
TOTAL	414
INSTRUMENT TYPES	
Cellphone	186
Chat Accounts	0
BBM	2
Other	0
TOTAL	188
INVESTIGATION ACTIVITY	
Trial Division	153
Special Invest. Bureau	117
Prescription Drug	54
Narcotics Gang	3
TOTAL	327

Special Investigations Bureau

The Special Investigations Bureau (SIB) targets major narcotics trafficking organizations, including those that import and distribute multi-kilogram quantities of cocaine and heroin. The activities of the criminal enterprises extend beyond county, state and international borders. SIB prosecutors work with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the New York City Police Department (NYPD), the New York State Police, the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force (NYDETF), the New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and other local, state, federal and foreign law enforcement.

In 2017, SIB launched 117 investigations targeting a wide range of criminal activity including drug trafficking, robberies, weapons trafficking and money laundering. The bureau also commenced civil actions to forfeit narcotics proceeds. Senior staff supervised wiretap investigations involving 414 eavesdropping applications, including 188 originals, 156 extensions and 70 amendments. Narcotics investigations resulted in the seizure of approximately 560 pounds of heroin (including mixtures of heroin and fentanyl and/or other substances), 666 pounds of cocaine, 360 pounds of fentanyl, 15 pounds of marijuana and various other drugs.

The Special Investigations Bureau targets major local and international narcotics trafficking organizations.

Heroin Interdiction Team

The resurgence of heroin throughout New York State drove SNP to create the Heroin Interdiction Team (HIT) in late 2014. HIT is tasked with combating the flow of heroin to the area surrounding New York City, particularly upstate counties. Working with a dedicated team of New York State Police troopers, DEA agents, NYPD officers and other law enforcement officials, HIT focuses on cooperating with local prosecutors and law enforcement to share intelligence and resources to take down the organizations responsible for spreading heroin from the mills in New York City to New York State as a whole.

Prescription Drug Investigation Unit

Alarming rates of prescription drug abuse and related crime led SNP to form the Prescription Drug Investigation Unit (PDIU). The unit, created in 2011, is designed to combat the proliferation of prescription narcotics on the black market by investigating and prosecuting the criminal distribution of these drugs. Prosecutions target a range of subjects, from members of street level drug organizations to doctors and pharmacists engaged in the criminal sale of prescriptions or pills. Armed robberies of pharmacies, shootings, home invasions and other violent crimes are also associated with prescription drug diversion. The unit works closely with the New York State Health Department's Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement, the NYPD and the DEA, among other law enforcement agencies.

The expertise and dedication of Assistant District Attorneys and Investigative Analysts has positioned PDIU as a leader in the field.

Narcotics Gang Unit

The Gang Unit prosecutes members of violent gangs for narcotics trafficking, shootings, robberies and other related crime.

The Narcotics Gang Unit was established in 2002. It concentrates on violent neighborhood gangs, robbery crews and weapons traffickers committing drug-related criminal activity across the city. The unit works closely with detectives from the NYPD's Gun Violence Suppression Division, Narcotics and Gang Squads, and Precinct members. The unit has developed expertise in the use of new technologies and collecting evidence through social media, such as Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook, and messaging applications. In addition to narcotics trafficking, the unit also prosecutes murder and murder conspiracy, assault, armed robbery, kidnapping, burglary, weapons possession and illegal firearms sales.

Money Laundering and Financial Investigations Unit

The Money Laundering and Financial Investigations Unit was initiated in 2001, and reconfigured in 2005 and 2008. It investigates narcotics-related money laundering and other financial criminal activity. Cases are generated from multiple sources, including intelligence developed during narcotics investigations. The unit aims to prevent foreign drug trafficking organizations from repatriating drug proceeds through smuggling, as well as the use of the financial system and international trade, and local drug organizations from benefiting from illicit profits.

Forfeiture Investigations

Established more than 25 years ago, the Forfeiture Investigations Unit evaluates felony drug prosecutions for potential civil litigation to recover proceeds of narcotics crimes. The unit works closely with law enforcement on the federal, state and local levels to identify criminal assets and deprive narcotics traffickers and money-laundering groups of the profits of criminality. The unit has in place a comprehensive set of systems to track office participation in investigations resulting in forfeiture actions. In 2017, 179 federal forfeiture actions were initiated and 241 were completed. At the state level, 304 actions were initiated and 294 were completed.

A safe containing hundreds of thousands of dollars was seized from a citywide narcotics supplier.

Investigators Unit

SNP's Investigators Unit handles narcotics cases targeting local, national and international trafficking groups, as well as trafficking over the Internet. Teams within the unit have expertise in identifying and dismantling major heroin and fentanyl trafficking organizations within New York City and in investigating prescription drug diversion rings and corrupt medical practitioners. Investigators provide crucial leadership in collaborative efforts with law enforcement partners.

Created in 1992, the unit fulfills two primary areas of responsibility: investigations and enforcement support. The unit initiates cases independently and works jointly with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies throughout New York City and across the nation. During 2017, the unit opened 28 new investigations, resulting in 226 arrests. Of those, 192 individuals were charged with top felony narcotics counts and two with violations of money laundering laws. As a result of those arrests, 215 pounds of heroin, 172 pounds of fentanyl, and 165 pounds of cocaine were seized. Investigations by the unit and its DEA and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) partners yielded cash seizures totaling millions of dollars in narcotics trafficking proceeds.

Many investigators in the unit are law enforcement veterans who formerly served with the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) Narcotics Division and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's New York Drug Enforcement Task Force (NYDETF). A Chief Investigator oversees the activities of the investigators and monitors all investigation-related expenditures.

Trial Division

2017 SNP WORKLOAD	
Arrests	1,832
Indictments/SCI	1,219
Trials	28
FELONY DISPOSITIONS	
Convicted	1,234
Acquitted	8
Dismissed	50
Treatment Dismissals	61
Does not include declinations to extradite fugitives due to age/viability of prosecutions.	
FELONY SENTENCES	
State Prison	625
City Jail	200
Probation	228
City Jail & Probation	42
SEIZURES	
Cocaine	783 lbs.
Heroin	908 lbs.
Fentanyl	491 lbs.
Oxycodone	12,530 pills
Methamphetamine	50 lbs.
Marijuana	193 lbs.
Guns Seized	41

Heroin total includes heroin mixed with fentanyl and/or other substances.

Trial Division Assistant District Attorneys handle the bulk of the drug felony arrests referred to the office for prosecution. They are assigned to one of the two bureaus that comprise the Trial Division. Each bureau is headed by a Chief and Deputy Chief who supervise assistants as they provide legal advice and draw up court orders, including search and arrest warrants, on a 24-hour basis.

Assistants work closely with the NYPD's Narcotics Division, the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, the Port Authority Police, the New York State Police, the New York State Health Department's Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement and the SNP Investigators Unit. In 2017, the Division launched 153 new investigations. A total of 1,832 complaints were referred to the office for prosecution during the year; 1,219 defendants were prosecuted by indictment or Supreme Court information (SCI). Total SNP search warrants drafted numbered 1,709.

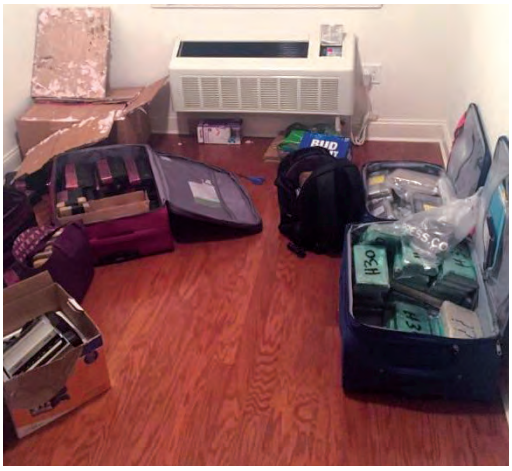
Trial Division Assistant District Attorneys handle the majority of arrests referred to SNP for prosecution.

Case Highlights

Fentanyl and Heroin in Record Amounts

Record Fentanyl Seizure in Queens

A record-breaking stash of 64 kilograms of fentanyl (over 140 pounds) was recovered from an apartment in Kew Gardens, Queens. In addition to the pure fentanyl, agents and detectives from New Jersey DEA and the NYPD's Queens Narcotics Major Case Squad recovered another 22 kilograms of fentanyl pre-mixed with other narcotics, five kilograms of heroin and six kilograms of cocaine, for a total of 97 kilograms of narcotics (213 pounds). A married couple from Mexico was stopped inside the parking garage of the Kew Gardens apartment building after agents and detectives tracked them from a Walmart parking lot in Manahawkin, N.J., where agents had observed an alleged drug transaction. Agents found the massive stash of drugs packed inside multiple suitcases as they conducted a court authorized search of an apartment where the couple was staying temporarily.



Nation's largest seizure of fentanyl, plus heroin and cocaine, in Kew Gardens.

Mexican Kingpin Supplied Fentanyl to NYC

A Mexico-based narcotics supplier was indicted under New York State's drug kingpin statute for allegedly supplying large loads of fentanyl to New York City. As charged in the indictment, Francisco Quiroz-Zamora orchestrated the delivery and sale of at least 20 kilograms of fentanyl (44 pounds) by phone from San José del Cabo. Narcotics were seized at the Umbrella Hotel in the Bronx and an apartment on Central Park West after Quiroz-Zamora unwittingly connected his alleged associates in New York City with an undercover officer from

Video within the Umbrella Hotel captured a suspected trafficker.

Duffel bag containing 17 kilograms of fentanyl found on a vending machine.

the DEA's New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force, Financial Investigations Team (FIT). Quiroz-Zamora was arrested at Penn Station in November of 2017 as he arrived in the city to collect an alleged narcotics payment. Most of the fentanyl seized in the case was found in a duffel bag on top of a vending machine in a 7th floor hallway of the Umbrella Hotel, next to a room occupied by an alleged Quiroz-Zamora associate. Another drug crew with alleged ties to Quiroz-Zamora used an apartment located at upscale 448 Central Park West to store and package drugs, some of which were stamped with the brand name "Uber." An Uber driver was among six defendants charged in the case.

$4 Million Cash, Heroin Seized From Storage Facility

More than $4 million in cash and three kilograms of heroin (over six pounds) were seized from an interstate trafficking group that transported drugs and money inside furniture outfitted with secret compartments. An investigation revealed alleged Bronx-based trafficker Jorge Pizarro leased a Secure Self Storage unit in his own name and moved furniture containing cash and drugs on a monthly basis between Texas, New York and Massachusetts. In March of 2017, federal agents observed Pizarro and two others loading furniture into a U-Haul truck at the storage facility. The defendants were detained and drug-sniffing dog alerted positively to the presence of narcotics. A court authorized search uncovered $3.4 million cash wrapped in dozens of packages inside pieces of furniture, as well as two wooden nightstands containing an additional $750,000 cash and three kilograms of heroin. Pizarro was sentenced to 4 ½ years in prison following a guilty plea to drug possession charges.

$4.1 million in cash was concealed in stored furniture.

Large Load of Fentanyl and Heroin in Car

DEA agents and NYPD detectives arrested two men and recovered 25 kilograms of fentanyl and heroin (55 pounds) from a car near the Major Deegan Expressway after following them from a Home Depot parking lot in Woodbridge, N.J. Agents were conducting surveillance near the parking lot when they saw the two men carry a large duffel bag of suspected narcotics away from a tractor-trailer with California license plates and place the bag in their vehicle. Agents followed the suspects over the George Washington Bridge and stopped their car in the Bronx. After obtaining a court order

55 pounds of fentanyl and heroin were found concealed in this bag.

to search the bag, agents recovered 25 kilogram-sized packages inside. Laboratory analysis confirmed the presence of fentanyl and a fentanyl/heroin mixture.

Heroin Packaging Operation Near P.S. 115

Just as a new school year got underway in September of 2017, investigators uncovered a heroin packaging operation across the street from an elementary school, P.S. 115 in Washington Heights. A court-authorized search of an apartment at 575 West 177th Street yielded approximately 5,000 individual dose glassine envelopes containing heroin laced with tramadol (a synthetic opioid) and quantities of loose powder. Stamps used to brand the narcotics included "Daily News," "Spiderman" and "Showtime," among others. Three defendants were charged.

Heroin and Fentanyl Seized From Packaging Mill

Agents made 10 arrests and seized over two million dollars in heroin and fentanyl from an active drug packaging operation in the Morrisania neighborhood of the Bronx. Members of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force were conducting surveillance as part of an investigation into narcotics trafficking in New York City and Long Island when they observed a suspect exit an a Bronx apartment building and load a suitcase into a black minivan. Agents stopped the vehicle and found nearly 50,000 individual dose glassine envelopes of heroin stamped with brands "Magic City" and "Red Bull." The investigation led agents to obtain a search warrant for an apartment believed to contain a heroin packaging mill. Upon entering, they saw nine individuals engaged in bagging up heroin. Several mill workers attempted to flee, but were apprehended. Agents recovered approximately a kilogram of powdered heroin (two pounds), 800 grams of fentanyl analogue and thousands of heroin-filled glassine envelopes.

Over $2 million in heroin and fentanyl were seized in the Bronx.

Heroin Supplier Sentenced in Record Seizure

A Manhattan Supreme Court judge sentenced a drug trafficker to 14 years in prison in connection with the record largest cache of heroin seized by DEA New York Division. Jose Mercedes, Sr. governed an expansive narcotics network that regularly

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2015

New York

The New York Times

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's special narcotics prosecutor, hold a news conference on Tuesday to announce the seizure by drug agents of 155 pounds of heroin and $2 million in cash.

U.S. Says It Disrupted Major Heroin-Importing Operation in Bronx

By AL BAKER

There were few outward signs of the thriving heroin trade that federal officials say was being operated on a quiet block in the Bronx across from Van Cortlandt Park. No one seemed to be permanently living in the apartment, 1E, at 206 West 231st Street, just outside the exclusive Fieldston neighborhood, officials said.

But as federal agents raided the hideout over the weekend, they upended what they described on Tuesday as a major heroin-importing organization that had ties to an area in Mexico controlled by the Sinaloa Cartel and that had been receiving multimillion-dollar shipments of the drug at least once a month since 2013.

Traffickers from Mexico even visited New York to see things for themselves, taking in the sights and visiting Times Square, officials said.

The seizure on Sunday capped an elaborate yearlong investigation, yielding 70 kilograms of heroin — or nearly 155 pounds — that investigators say came from Mexico and was sold in ...

Officials say Apartment 1E in the building at left was used as a safe house and cash was hidden in the floorboards.

New York Times, May 20, 2015

smuggled dozens of kilograms of heroin from Mexico to the New York City area. Members of the DEA's New York Drug Enforcement Task Force recovered 70 kilograms (over 150 pounds) of heroin from a parked vehicle in the Fieldston section of the Bronx. A search of a stash apartment yielded over $2 million in cash found beneath the floorboards. The heroin from this seizure alone could have fetched over $50 million on the black market. Prior to his arrest in 2015, Mercedes lived a lavish lifestyle in New York and employed many family members, some of whom he compelled to live with Mexican cartels as guarantors for drug transactions. Others were employed to transport narcotics across state lines and package narcotics for resale.

Major West Side Drug Operation

Approximately 28 kilograms of heroin and cocaine (over 60 pounds) and over $300,000 were recovered during an investigation into a drug ring operating on Cabrini Boulevard near Riverside Drive in Upper Manhattan. Agents and investigators with the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force and SNP also seized more than 9,000 counterfeit oxycodone pills made from illicit fentanyl. The total street value of the drugs was estimated at more than $10 million. Agents and investigators were conducting surveillance at 95 Cabrini Boulevard, when a suspect emerged carrying a full garbage bag and placed it into a BMW vehicle. Agents stopped the car and recovered over $300,000 cash. The investigation led agents to identify and search a suspected drug stash location. They found dozens of brick-shaped packages of narcotics hidden inside furniture outfitted with hidden compartments, including some packages marked with the brand "Audi." Also in the apartment were thousands of pills that resembled oxycodone. Laboratory analysis showed the more than 9,000 pills were counterfeits made from illicit fentanyl.

Hidden "trap" compartment concealed heroin, cocaine and illicit fentanyl pills.

"Supersized" Fentanyl Doses: Drug Delivery Service

Extra-large doses of fentanyl threatened several Brooklyn neighborhoods before law enforcement officials intervened.

A drug delivery service sold extra-large doses of fentanyl, as well as crack-cocaine and heroin, in the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Bensonhurst, Borough Park and Sunset Park. During the investigation, one defendant sold over 1,300 "supersized" glassine envelopes of pure fentanyl for over $34,000 in a dozen meetings with an undercover NYPD officer. A court authorized search of a Brooklyn residence associated with the delivery yielded quantities of fentanyl, cocaine, crack-cocaine, pills, marijuana and approximately $2,500 cash.

Washington Square Drug Probe

An investigation into street-level drug dealing in Washington Square Park led to the indictment of major citywide narcotics suppliers and the seizure of a firearm. Three defendants were charged in May after an investigation by the NYPD, SNP and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office in which the defendants allegedly made 15 sales of cocaine, heroin and fentanyl to undercover officers for over $20,000. The case began in Greenwich Village and expanded to locations throughout Manhattan and the Bronx. A court authorized search of a smoke shop at 59 West 8th Street led police to recover multiple kilo presses (used to process narcotics in bulk) and individual glassine envelopes commonly used in street sales. Police seized one firearm from a Bronx drug supplier's apartment.

Overdose Death Investigations

Fourteen Arrested Following Fentanyl Fatality

A woman's fatal overdose on a fentanyl/heroin mixture stamped with the brand "Scorpion" sparked an investigation by SNP, the NYPD and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. Police arrested 14 defendants from two narcotic trafficking groups in Washington Heights after undercover officers made over 30 purchases of heroin, cocaine and a heroin/fentanyl mixture from the defendants, including one purchase of drugs stamped "Scorpion." Five firearms, three kilograms of cocaine (nearly seven pounds) and 60 pounds of marijuana were seized.

Tracking the "Passion" brand stamp was essential to the case.

Staten Island Overdose Leads to Arrest

The fatal overdose of a 24-year-old Staten Island woman in her bedroom led police to initiate the investigation "Operation Smack Down." Police found empty envelopes marked with the brand name "Passion" at the scene of the death. A wiretap investigation by SNP, the NYPD and the Richmond County District Attorney's Office resulted in the indictment of eight alleged narcotics traffickers. Police identified Mack Patterson as the person believed to have sold the "Passion" stamped narcotics. Undercover NYPD officers purchased heroin and/or fentanyl from Patterson and his co-conspirators 10 times in six months.

"American Dream" Narcotics Lead to Deaths

A long-term wiretap investigation uncovered links between narcotics stamped with the name "American Dream" and two overdose deaths in late 2016 and early 2017, including

Probe targeting "American Dream" heroin led to 20 arrests.

that of a woman who fatally overdosed on a New York City subway. Twenty defendants were charged as a result of the investigation by SNP, the NYPD and the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office. Initially, undercover officers made purchases from members of a Brooklyn-based drug organization allegedly headed by Akeem King. Police then identified defendant Robert Gonzalez as an alleged supplier of narcotics stamped with the name "American Dream" and a picture of the Statue of Liberty. Laboratory tests revealed that some of the heroin recovered during the investigation contained forms of fentanyl. Although King and Rodriguez are not charged in the drug deaths, both face the state's top narcotics charge of Operating as a Major Trafficker.

Bronx Open Air Drug Market Disrupted

Police dismantled an open air market in the Fordham Manor section of the Bronx where an overdose was captured on video. Eight drug suppliers and street-level dealers were charged in sales of fentanyl and heroin following a six-month investigation by the NYPD and the New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force Group. A brother and sister team ran a lucrative business allegedly supplying dealers at the open air market, where customers lined up near a bottle redemption location. Agents obtained video footage showing a defendant sell glassine envelopes to a customer, who began to overdose soon after consuming the narcotics. Emergency responders successfully revived the victim. The defendants also sold narcotics laced with fentanyl to undercover officers. A court authorized search of the male supplier's residence yielded over 600 glassines of heroin and fentanyl stamped with the brand name "Pray for Death" and approximately $280,000 cash.

"Pray For Death" branded narcotics sold in the Bronx.

Prescription Drug Trafficking

Rx Forgeries Net $3 Million in Painkillers

Seven alleged members of a prescription forgery ring were arrested for illegally obtaining more than 160,000 oxycodone pills worth $3 million. Prescriptions were forged in the name of a pain management physician based in Astoria, Queens. Ring leaders hired family members and friends as runners to illegally fill over 930 prescriptions at pharmacies in Queens and Brooklyn. Initially, some runners filled up to eight oxycodone prescriptions in a single month. However, the investigation by SNP's Prescription Drug Investigation Unit, DEA New York Division and the New York City Human Resources Administration revealed that the pace of the criminal activity slowed with the implementation of New York State's I-STOP (Internet System for Tracking Over-Prescribing), which tightened restrictions on the prescribing of controlled substances.

Brooklyn Clinics Pumped 6.3 Million Painkillers onto Black Market

13 Accused of Roles in a $24 Million Brooklyn Pill Ring

By ELI ROSENBERG and NATE SCHWEBER

Officials in New York arrested 12 people on Friday in what was described as a conspiracy involving three Brooklyn medical clinics that helped flood the streets with prescription painkillers while defrauding Medicare and Medicaid out of millions of dollars.

After announcing the arrests — a 13th person, a former state assemblyman from Brooklyn, was also indicted in the case — prosecutors described the scope of the conspiracy, saying it put 6.3 million oxycodone pills on New York's black market and generated more than $24 million for the three clinics.

Noting that the abuse of drugs like the painkiller oxycodone had helped fuel a national opioid epidemic, officials said the case combined a drug conspiracy and Medicaid fraud, in which the clinics also billed the government for expensive but unneeded tests.

"I have to say I've never really seen anything like it," Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's special narcotics prosecutor, said at a news conference on Friday.

Those charged in two indictments announced on Friday included three doctors, Michael Taitt, Paul McClung and Lazar Feygin, who was described as the "chief architect" of the scheme; medical office managers Pavel Krasnou, Vyacheslav Maksakov, Rachel Smolitsky and Konstantin Zeva; physician assistants Juan Cabezas, Marie Nazaire and Abdus Sattar; a nurse practitioner, Marjorie Louis-Jacques; and a physical therapist, Reynat Glaz. The former assemblyman, Alec Brook-Krasny, was out of the country, officials said.

The yearslong investigation that led to the charges began when federal agents and narcotics investigators found a group of "doctor shoppers," people seeking prescription pills even though they did not need them for medical reasons.

Officials said they learned in the course of the inquiry that two Brooklyn clinics owned by Dr. Feygin — Parkville Medical Health, in the Kensington neighborhood, and LF Medical Services of NY, in Clinton Hill — were selling large numbers of prescriptions for oxycodone.

DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Thirteen people, including, from left, Dr. Lazar Feygin, Dr. Paul McClung and Juan Cabezas, are accused of taking part in a conspiracy to defraud the government and sell opioid prescriptions.

The investigators said Dr. Feygin began hiring medical staff members in 2012 in order to prescribe the oxycodone.

Some of the employees, including Dr. McClung and Mr. Cabezas, started another practice in 2013 and began engaging in similar criminal activity, the officials said.

Dr. Feygin and members of the staff at his two clinics prescribed more than 3.7 million pills from 2012 to 2017, and received more than $16 million in reimbursements from Medicaid and Medicare, officials said; the third clinic was responsible for 2.6 million pills, and was reimbursed more than $8 million.

Charges of flooding the streets with painkillers and bilking the government.

The investigation was conducted in part by the federal Drug Enforcement Administration, the New York City Investigation Department and special narcotics prosecutor's office, the State Department of Health, and the Brooklyn district attorney's office.

Mr. Brook-Krasny helped direct unnecessary laboratory testing of urine samples through his affiliation with Quality Laboratory Services in Sheepshead Bay, officials said. (His LinkedIn page describes him as the company's chief operating officer.) He also arranged to alter test results with conditions like the presence of alcohol that would have made opioids difficult to prescribe.

Frank V. Carone, Mr. Brook-Krasny's lawyer, said that his client would turn himself in when he returned from a family trip and that he was "simply a third-party service provider and nothing more."

"My client understands the seriousness of the charges, and of course opioid abuse, but as for the allegations that he is somehow culpable is an incredible injustice," Mr. Carone wrote in an email.

As he was led into a Manhattan courthouse at the head of a line of suspects, Dr. Feygin denied that he or his co-defendants had ever fed anyone's addiction.

"We're not treating addicts; we're treating very, very sick people," he said. "We're primary-care physicians."

Judge Neil Ross of Manhattan Criminal Court ordered Dr. Feygin held without bail. Prosecutors noted that he had an apartment in Russia.

Arthur Gershfeld, a lawyer for Mr. Krasnou and Dr. McClung, said the large number of pills prescribed was proof of a great number of patients served, not of wrongdoing.

Dr. Feygin, a native of Belarus who moved to the United States more than 25 years ago, was featured in a 2013 New York Times video about style in Brighton Beach, a Russian-American enclave in Brooklyn. He talked about his personal shopper and pointed out his Ferragamo shoes.

"This style in Russia was almost impossible," he says in the video. "I didn't have enough money. I worked, and I still work very, very hard to have an opportunity to spend enough money to be stylish."

New York Times, April 8, 2017

Three Brooklyn pill mills were shuttered and 13 individuals charged in schemes to defraud Medicaid and Medicare of millions of dollars, to illegally sell prescriptions for over 6.3 million opioid painkillers and to commit money laundering and commercial bribery. Alleged mastermind Dr. Lazar Feygin, one of New York State's top Medicaid billers, and a second physician, Dr. Paul McClung, allegedly orchestrated the scheme with assistance from other doctors and medical practitioners, office staff and a former New York State assemblyman employed at Quality Laboratory Services.

Doctors at the three clinics allegedly provided patients with prescriptions for oxycodone for no legitimate medical purposes. In exchange, patients were required to undergo unnecessary medical tests and procedures that were billed to Medicare and Medicaid. At the height of the conspiracies in 2016, the clinics conducted

more than 1,600 office visits per months. The defendants also engaged in laundering money to conceal illicit proceeds.

The clinics were shuttered in April of 2017 as a result of collaboration between SNP's Prescription Drug Investigation Unit, DEA New York Division, the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office, the Office of the Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the NYC Department of Investigation, the NYC Human Resources Administration and the New York State Health Department's Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement.

Staten Island to Brooklyn Rx Drug Ring

Six defendants were indicted in a scheme to funnel addictive opioid painkillers onto the black market in Staten Island and Brooklyn. During the charged conspiracy, which ran from August 2016 to October 2016, the defendants allegedly filled prescriptions for over 2,800 oxycodone pills. Some of the defendants sold oxycodone to an undercover NYPD officer. Several sales took place at a Home Depot parking lot in Staten Island and near the Poly Prep Country Day School in Dyker Heights, Brooklyn. The long-term wiretap investigation was conducted by SNP, the Richmond County District Attorney's Office and the NYPD.

Cocaine and Crystal Meth in NYC

$2 Million in Narcotics Disguised as Candy

Bags of individually wrapped "candies" that were expertly designed to conceal $2 million in cocaine and heroin were recovered in Jackson Heights, Queens. Members of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force tracked a suspect carrying a backpack from a residential building to a nearby gas station

These bags helped conceal over $2 million in cocaine and heroin from detection.

and observed a drug transaction. Agents recovered two large, colorful plastic bags that were heat-sealed and contained what appeared to be individually wrapped candies. Laboratory analysis revealed the candy wrappers were filled with approximately two kilograms of heroin (over four pounds). Agents obtained a search warrant for the individual's residence at 3226 82nd Street and recovered another 1 ½ kilograms of cocaine and heroin (over three pounds), with some packaged like candy.

Diamond District Cocaine Cache

Law enforcement officials foiled a plan to distribute over 120 pounds of cocaine.

A fictitious jewelry business in the Diamond District in Midtown, Manhattan served as a cover for a major drug importation and distribution scheme. Approximately 55 kilograms of cocaine (121 pounds) worth more than $2 million were seized from offices at 43 West 47th Street during

an investigation by the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force. Prior to the search, agents established surveillance outside the location and saw delivery men carrying orange bags suspected to contain packages of narcotics enter the building and proceed to suite 503. After the delivery men departed, an individual associated with the location was arrested as he tried to leave the building.

Narcotics in U.S. Mail: 13 Arrests

U.S. Mail packages containing exercise equipment and children's toys were used to smuggle narcotics from Puerto Rico. Over 21 kilograms of cocaine and heroin (46 pounds), with a combined street value of $4.5 million, were seized by the DEA New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. Initially centered on a major Bronx-based trafficker, the investigation grew to encompass fellow distributors, kilogram-quantity customers and sources of supply in San Juan, P.R. Packages containing narcotics were delivered to addresses in New York and New Jersey. Investigators also recovered approximately $150,000 in cash, $70,000 in jewelry, a rifle and a stun gun. An indictment filed by SNP charged three defendants with Operating as a Major Trafficker. One of these three plead guilty to a top drug possession charge in exchange for a sentence of 8 ½ years in prison.

East Coast Cocaine Source

A major narcotics supplier from Puerto Rico faces charges of conspiring to smuggle millions of dollars in cocaine to multiple states via the U.S. Postal Service. Six defendants were charged in connection with multi-kilogram packages shipped on a monthly basis to Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Florida. Investigators seized 11 kilograms of cocaine (over 24 pounds) from the group. In order to avoid detection by postal workers and would-be thieves, the Puerto Rican supplier allegedly packed drugs inside metal cosmetic boxes sealed with silicone. Packages were mailed to fictitious names at real addresses, where associates intercepted parcels upon delivery. During a 10-month period, approximately $2 million in drug proceeds (equivalent to the price of 70 kilograms of cocaine) were transferred through an elaborate network of money brokers.

Crystal Meth Smuggled on Car Carrier

Authorities thwarted a plot to smuggle eight kilograms of "crystal meth" (nearly 18 pounds) into New York City on a car carrier. A wiretap investigation revealed suspected traffickers had concealed drugs within a Nissan Altima that agents and detectives with the New York Drug Enforcement Strike Force learned was on a car carrier traveling on Interstate 95. Agents stopped the transport vehicle outside of Warwick, R.I. and located a Nissan Altima sedan with California license plates. A court authorized search uncovered a hidden "trap" compartment containing eight plastic-wrapped parcels, which DEA laboratory analysis confirmed contained eight kilograms of methamphetamine. After the

18 pounds of crystal methamphetamine were hidden in a "trap compartment" in a car carrier.

car's registered owner retrieved the vehicle from DEA offices, calls between her and another individual about the missing crystal meth led agents and officers to identify the intended recipient of the drug shipment. This individual was also implicated in sales of heroin to undercover officers.

McDonald's Manager Serves up Cocaine

A McDonald's night shift manager was arrested following a four-month investigation into cocaine sales at the franchise he oversaw on Bruckner Boulevard in the Bronx. During the investigation dubbed "Operation off the Menu," the manager made eight cocaine sales to an undercover officer for nearly $11,000. The manager brought the undercover officer inside the restaurant at times when only the drive-thru window was open. Two drug sales took place over the restaurant counter with other McDonald's employees nearby. Cocaine was concealed in a cookie bag and placed inside an order of two cheeseburgers, soda and fries. Another sale occurred in the public restroom, where cocaine was stashed in a soap dispenser.

6 Thursday, October 5, 2017

Cops blow into McD's

WANT FRIES with that coke?

The night shift manager at a Bronx McDonald's has been busted for serving up cocaine with the fast food, prosecutors said Wednesday.

Frank Guerrero, 26, worked at the 24-hour McDonald's on Bruckner Blvd. by Morrison Ave. in Soundview for eight years, and during that time, he often unlocked the doors to sell drugs in the middle of the night, prosecutors said.

Cops and federal authorities got a tip about the scheme and ordered up eight supersized drug buys "in increasingly larger quantities," before arresting him Wednesday morning.

Guerrero stashed the cocaine on a soap dispenser in the restaurant's bathroom before his shift started, and sold cocaine and crack with the burgers he rang up, authorities said.

Twice, he sold the drugs to an undercover officer at the counter, shoving the contraband in a cookie bag, which he stuffed alongside two cheeseburgers, a soda and fries, prosecutors said.

He made the deal under the noses of the other employees at the burger joint, prosecutors said.

"Guerrero's conduct was so blatant, it would be comical if he weren't committing a serious narcotics crime," said Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget Brennan. "Ordering coke took on an entirely different meaning on the night shift at this McDonald's."

Guerrero's girlfriend, Leidy Cabral Castillo, 24, was also arrested.

John Annese

Bronx McDonald's manager Frank Guerrero (below) is accused of selling cocaine (inset) with menu items.

New York Daily News, October 5, 2017

A court authorized search of the manager's home yielded 200 grams of cocaine and approximately $5,300 cash.

Police Officer Charged with LIC Cocaine Sales

An NYPD officer was arrested on narcotics charges after two sales of cocaine to an undercover SNP investigator in the vicinity of 38th Avenue and 11th Street in Long Island City, Queens. A six-year NYPD veteran, Jose Sierra was assigned to Housing Bureau Patrol Service Area 7 in the Bronx. He was off-duty during the drug sales, which took place in his 2017 Honda Accord and involved a total of 22 packets of cocaine sold for $360. Court-authorized searches of the car, a second individual involved in the drug sales and Sierra's home in Flushing, Queens yielded quantities of cocaine, a pistol registered to Sierra and drug paraphernalia. The investigation was conducted with assistance from the Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) of the NYPD and ICE—Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

Dealer Diversifies with Fake Sweepstakes

The ringleader in parallel criminal schemes to traffic in narcotics and defraud elderly victims of hundreds of thousands of dollars was sentenced to 10 years in prison. Ricardo Castang and his co-conspirators coaxed checks totaling over $300,000 from victims by convincing them they had won the Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes. All that stood between the "winners" and their prizes was advance payment of fees and taxes. More than two dozen victims from 17 states mailed checks to Castang's home address in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, and a nearby post office. The scheme unraveled after Castang was arrested for importing cocaine from Costa Rica for sale in New York. The investigation revealed he and his codefendants had

Cocaine seized from sweepstakes scammer.

transferred over $480,000 in illicit proceeds from both fraud and drug trafficking to Costa Rica over the course of 2 ½ years. The investigation was conducted by SNP and the DEA's New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force, with assistance from the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

Drugs and Guns

Santino Boderick Sentenced for Role in "GS 9" Gang Warfare

Santino Boderick, a member of the violent Brooklyn street crew "GS 9," was sentenced to 117 ½ to 130 years in prison on 23 charges stemming from his role in gang warfare that roiled New York City and Miami, Fla. Manhattan jurors convicted Boderick of Attempted Murder, Criminal Use of a Firearm and Conspiracy, among other crimes. Members of the East Flatbush-based "GS 9" criminal gang also performed in a rap group known by same name. Rappers Ackquille Pollard, aka "Bobby Shmurda," and Chad Marshall, aka "Rowdy Rebel," were each sentenced to seven years in prison after admitting to their roles in the conspiracy. Members of "GS 9" engaged in wild shootouts with rival crews and endangered innocent bystanders. Attacks were plotted in recorded phone conversations with incarcerated gang members. The proceeds of drug sales funded gun purchases. Evidence proved Boderick was present at four shootings, including three in which he was a shooter.

Fugitive Hunt Leads to 40 Pounds of Narcotics

A hunt for a federal fugitive took an unexpected twist when U.S. Marshals Service deputies discovered they had entered the wrong apartment, but found a large stash of heroin, cocaine and fentanyl instead. As the deputies secured an apartment in the Pelham Bay neighborhood of the Bronx, they came across a bag containing more than 20 brick-shaped packages in a bedroom closet and more suspected drugs in the kitchen and a hall closet. Agents also found a loaded firearm and a bulletproof vest. Deputies alerted members of the DEA's New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force, who seized the suspected narcotics pursuant to a search warrant. Laboratory analysis determined the stash contained over 18 kilograms of heroin, cocaine and fentanyl (approximately 40 pounds), and a pound of marijuana. A man and a woman who

Two "kilo presses" used to package narcotics found by U.S. Marshals Service deputies.

were inside the apartment with their young child were placed under arrest. The fugitive was found in a different apartment on the same floor.

11 Charged: Drug and Gun Conspiracies

Eleven defendants were charged in the wake of a wiretap investigation into drug trafficking at NYCHA's Eleanor Roosevelt Houses in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. Members of a drug ring headed by twin brothers allegedly made over two dozen sales of crack cocaine to undercover officers. The investigation by SNP, the NYPD and the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office also uncovered plans to carry out a home invasion robbery of a drug trafficker in Rochester, N.Y. and to steal firearms. Police recovered four firearms, approximately two kilograms of powder and crack cocaine (over four pounds), 500 grams of heroin (one pound) and 27 pounds of marijuana, as well as $110,000 in cash and several luxury automobiles.

Four firearms were seized, along with crack cocaine, heroin, marijuana and $110,000 in cash.

Auxiliary Police Officer Charged in Gun Sale

An auxiliary police officer in the NYPD's 23rd Precinct in East Harlem was among six defendants indicted in sales of heroin, cocaine, anabolic steroids and a firearm. The defendants sold more than $30,000 worth of drugs to undercover NYPD officers. An additional two kilograms of heroin (4 ½ pounds) worth more than $500,000, approximately $11,000 cash and a quantity of steroids were recovered during court-authorized searches. Auxiliary police officer Ramon Espinal allegedly set up a gun sale in texts with a co-defendant. Espinal allegedly wrote, "Have Smith and Wesson it is good quality" and included a photo of a Smith & Wesson 9mm firearm with a discernible serial number. Espinal and the co-defendant agreed to meet that same day. Three weeks later the co-defendant sold the firearm from the photo to an undercover officer.

NYC to Albany Supply Chain Disrupted

Five alleged members of a Brooklyn criminal gang known as the "Outlaws" were arrested for trafficking large quantities of cocaine to Albany. Police seized six guns during the investigation, which began in April 2016 when police learned drug dealers in Albany and Schenectady were traveling to purchase cocaine and heroin from Brooklyn suppliers. The suppliers allegedly conspired to obtain multiple kilogram quantities of cocaine for resale each month, with a single kilogram carrying a price of approximately $36,000 wholesale. Customers included street-level drug dealers in New York City and in upstate New York. The arrests are the result of a long-term wiretap investigation by the NYPD's Gun Violence Suppression Division, SNP, the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office, the Albany County District Attorney's Office and the New York State Police.

Alternative Sentencing Division

For addicted criminal offenders, an effective drug treatment program can mean the difference between repeated terms of imprisonment and the ability to lead a productive, law-abiding life. Yet it is not enough to simply conquer addiction. To begin anew, recovering drug users require skills gained through academic and vocational training, along with supportive counseling. The Alternative Sentencing Division has successfully worked with thousands of addicted criminal defendants over the past two decades to provide them with the tools they need to permanently close the door on crime and dependence.

Through SNP's pioneering Drug Treatment Alternatives to Prison (DTAP) programs, highly experienced staff members evaluate offenders to identify those who are likely to reap the benefits of treatment. Eligible candidates are given the opportunity to enter an appropriate program, most often at a long-term residential facility, instead of going to prison. SNP also refers eligible offenders with co-occurring substance use and mental illness disorders to the Manhattan Mental Health Court to provide integrated substance use and mental health treatment.

Residential programs typically last for at least one year and are followed by an additional term of supervision. Offenders who are employed and have strong community ties may be placed into short-term residential programs or, in rare cases, directly into intensive outpatient treatment programs. When offenders enter treatment, their sentences are deferred. Upon successful completion, charges may be dismissed. However, failure to abide by the rules of a program can result in a sanction. If offenders commit a new crime, their original prison sentence may be imposed.

Since October 2009, judges are authorized to place defendants in a court sponsored diversion program. Although a judge determines which addicted felony offenders qualify for these programs, and court staff supervises them, SNP continues to offer its expertise in the screening and monitoring of diverted defendants.

Also in 2009, mandatory prison sentences were abolished or reduced for felony narcotics charges. Since 2011, a substantially lower number of offenders have applied for and been accepted into treatment.

SNP DEFENDANTS ENTERING TREATMENT 2005–2017

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
DTAP	169	137	90	114	91	36	7	5	6	1	5	3	2
MTC	156	101	81	76	33	17	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diversion					18	99	68	73	74	71	66	87	77
Total Treatment	325	238	171	190	142	152	81	78	80	72	71	90	79
Indictments/SCI	2,424	2,178	1,974	1,703	1,595	1,376	1,293	1,373	1,364	1,228	1,200	1,338	1,219
% Indictments/ SCI diverted	13%	11%	9%	11%	9%	11%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%	6%

Legal Training Unit

The Legal Training Unit develops and implements the professional training curriculum offered to Assistant District Attorneys. The unit selects speakers, lectures and workshops to address topics that include investigatory and prosecutorial techniques, legal procedures, changes in the law and effective approaches to the prosecution of felony narcotic and related crimes.

In 2017, the Legal Training Unit offered a professional development series and numerous lectures throughout the year to both experienced and new assistant district attorneys. Presentations included: *Blind/ Blinded Photo Arrays & How You Litigate Them; The Art and Practice of Conducting Surety Exams, Video Surveillance: The Latest in Technology, Case Law, and Practical Use as Evidence;* and *Chain of Custody in Narcotics Cases*, among others.

The training curriculum complies with the regulations and guidelines of the New York State Continuing Legal Education Board. The office has been a New York State CLE Accredited Provider since 2000.

For over a decade, SNP has devoted a portion of its resources to training programs offered to hundreds of local and federal enforcement and criminal justice personnel in New York and other areas of the country. Senior staff members lecture on narcotics investigations and prosecutions at the New York State District Attorney's Association (DAASNY) Summer College, the DAASNY Winter Conference, the New York Prosecutors Training Institute (NYPTI), the New York Police Department's Police Academy, Organized Crime Control Division and Narcotics Division, the DEA's New York Drug Enforcement Task Force (DETF), and the New York/New Jersey High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA).

Director of Training Kathryn M. Spota and Legal Assistant Thomas J. Nugent.

Assistant District Attorneys attend a training on NYPD records searches.

Chief of Investigations Joseph J. Tesoriero leads a CLE entitled Obtaining and Using FinCen Information.

NYPD Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Unit

The New York City Police Department (NYPD) has assigned a team of detectives to the office since 1972. The Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Unit, as it is known, is under the command of a senior NYPD lieutenant who serves as a liaison between SNP and the Detective Bureau's Criminal Enterprise Division.

Expert at tracking, safekeeping and presenting electronically recorded evidence, the detectives also provide support on search warrant investigations and maintain citywide repositories for electronically recorded evidence and SNP search warrants.

Search Warrants

The unit prepares search warrants and affidavits and expedites requests through SNP. Detectives keep track of all confiscated evidence and maintain a database on arrests and seizures resulting from the execution of search warrants. The unit also educates new investigators on search warrant procedures. In 2017, the unit processed 1,709 search warrants.

Digital Media Evidence

The unit tracks and controls "chain of custody" for electronic media evidence and makes certain that all audio/video evidence is secure. Additionally, the unit is responsible for the creation and testimony of grand jury/trial wiretap composite recordings and processes digital photographic evidence and data evidence.

In 2017, the unit registered 976 pieces of audio/video evidence, 1,291 pieces of wiretap media evidence and 295 pieces of data and photographic evidence. The unit also prepared, created and registered 3,655 duplicate copies of registered electronic media evidence. Editing of original video evidence to protect the identity of undercover officers and make compilations of original evidence was performed 98 times in 2017.

Members of the NYPD Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Unit are assigned by the Detective Bureau's Criminal Enterprise Division.

Support Services Units

Fiscal

All agency fiscal activities, including the production and submission of funding requests to federal, state and city funding agencies, and the monitoring of expenditures, fall under the responsibility of the Fiscal Unit. To that end, the unit assesses and approves purchases and payment vouchers, disbursement of funds, such as petty cash, and payroll coordination; enforces fiscal policy; conducts internal audits; and reviews and approves agency procurements.

Members of the Fiscal Unit submit funding requests and oversee expenditures.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Unit oversees and implements procedures related to the assignment or transfer of Assistant District Attorneys from the offices of the five county District Attorneys and the recruitment of managerial, administrative and clerical personnel. Unit staff participates in planning, developing and executing employee programs and policies for all staff. The unit disseminates information on mandatory programs and policies for all city agencies and monitors implementation of procedures; provides facts on citywide policies and labor relations issues; and maintains time and leave records for all staff. The unit is responsible for the bi-weekly distribution of paychecks and serves as liaison with the citywide payroll management system.

Human Resource professionals administer payroll and benefits for agency staff.

Public Information

The Public Information Unit responds to inquiries from members of the media, government agencies, advocacy groups and individuals on the status of cases, legal decisions, legislative action, citywide drug trafficking trends and joint enforcement efforts. Press releases, reports and testimony are prepared and distributed through the unit. The agency's website and social media accounts are also maintained by the unit.

Community Outreach

The Community Outreach Coordinator meets with community and religious leaders, block associations, the New York City Housing Authority and other groups to address local drug problems, while conferring regularly with NYPD officials to devise strategies to combat crime. Once an investigation is completed and a drug organization is removed from a building or neighborhood, resources are devoted toward providing community support services. Additionally, experienced prosecutors offer lectures to schools and youth groups, serve as mock trial coaches and speak at career days.

Information Technologies (IT)

Information Technology develops, establishes and administers SNP's computer and telecommunication systems. The unit identifies needs and puts in place systems that effectively merge technology with office processes, and provides a variety of case-related services.

Digital Forensics and Litigation Support: provides pre-trial and in-court technology support, including recovery and examination of evidence from electronic devices, trial exhibit preparation and presentation.

The Digital Forensics Unit assists in gathering evidence for investigators.

Application Development and Support: develops, maintains and supports computer software.

Technical Support: supports staff in using electronic devices and addresses technical problems.

IT professionals perform application development and provide infrastructure support.

Records Management: files, registers and maintains a record of closed and bench warranted case files and processes parole requests.

IT Infrastructure Support: oversees servers, computers, networks, computer storage, email and data backup maintenance and support.

Case Information: captures and tracks data pertaining to all cases prosecuted by the office, from arrest to disposition. The unit prepares regular reports and ad hoc reports on narcotics activities, and statistical analyses. Unit staff is assigned to the Trial Division to coordinate data capture and provide additional support.

Trial Preparation Assistants (TPAs)

TPAs support the work of each legal division in the office.

Trial Preparation Assistants (TPAs) are assigned to the Investigations Division, the Trial Division, Part N and the Alternative Sentencing Division. Investigation and Trial Division TPAs track cases, maintain case records and gather reports and legal papers required by Assistant District Attorneys. Additionally, they make arrangements for prisoners to be produced in court and help Assistants prepare for grand jury and trial presentations. Alternative Sentencing Bureau

TPAs interview defendants who are diverted to treatment and track their progress. Part N TPAs assist in tracking plea offers, grand jury actions and case dispositions that take place in the Part.

Criminal and Investigative Analysts

Analysts are instrumental to all stages of investigation and prosecution, using the most current technology available to enhance a case from its inception through trial. Evidence from various sources is analyzed, including telephone communication carriers, social media sources, Treasury Department data and prescription drug-related data. Analysts prepare and process subpoenas, provide background searches using public records and law enforcement specific databases, prepare investigative reports and act as points of contact for law enforcement. During the presentation of a case, analysts prepare trial exhibits and testify in the grand jury and at trial.

Analysts are instrumental to all stages of investigation and prosecution.

Extraditions/Detainers

The unit administers the return of fugitives apprehended or in custody in other jurisdictions and in foreign countries that have extradition treaties with the United States.

Grand Jury Reporters

Grand Jury Reporters record, produce and maintain transcripts of confidential testimony presented before the grand juries.

Interpretation and Translation Services

The unit interprets and translates for non-English speaking witnesses in debriefings with investigators and Assistant District Attorneys, and during testimony before the grand jury; provides written translation and transcription services for evidentiary consent and wiretap recordings that contain dialogue in a foreign language; and provides translation of foreign language documents.

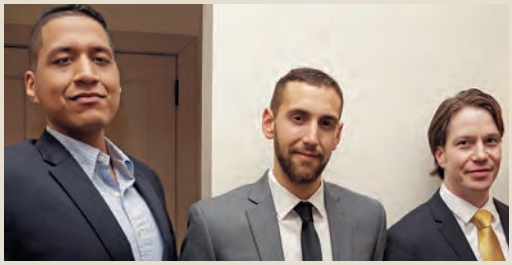
Operations

The Operations Unit is responsible for office maintenance, reproduction of documents, mail delivery, messenger services, housekeeping requests, office supply inventory and disbursement.

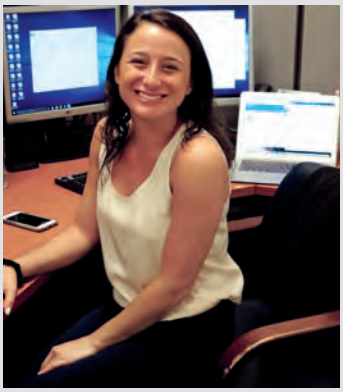
The Operations Unit keeps the office running smoothly.

The People of SNP

Holiday Party 2017



Around the Office



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