



Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor For the City of New York
Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics Prosecutor

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**Notorious Street Market for Narcotics Dismantled in the Bronx: Major
Trafficker Among 14 Charged; Two Guns Recovered**

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, Ray Donovan, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) New York Division, New York City Police Commissioner Dermot F. Shea, Troy A. Miller, Director of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) New York Field Office, Peter C. Fitzhugh, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) New York, New York State Police Superintendent Keith M. Corlett, Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr. and Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark announced charges against 14 members of a large narcotics trafficking organization following a long-term wiretap investigation into a conspiracy to sell heroin and cocaine.

An indictment filed today by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor charges Jack ACEVEDO, aka "Tone," with Operating as a Major Trafficker as the alleged leader of a large narcotics organization which controlled drug activity in the vicinity of 3rd Avenue in Mott Haven. Nine "managers" who allegedly worked under ACEVEDO are charged in the indictment, as well as several narcotics suppliers and distributors.

Arrests occurred this morning in the Bronx, Manhattan, Jersey City, N.J. and Everett, Mass. Arraignments for those defendants arrested in New York City are scheduled for this afternoon before Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Felicia Mennin, Part 61, 111 Centre Street, 9th floor. Extradition proceedings are pending for defendants arrested in New Jersey and Massachusetts. The indictment contains charges of Operating as a Major Trafficker, Conspiracy in the Second Degree, Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the First, Second and Third Degrees and Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree.

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr. reviewed and submitted wiretap applications for court authorization. The wiretap investigation was conducted by the New York Strike Force, a crime-fighting

unit comprising federal, state and local law enforcement agencies supported by the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force and the New York/New Jersey High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area.

The Strike Force is housed at the DEA's New York Division and includes agents and officers of the DEA; the New York City Police Department; the New York State Police; Immigration and Customs Enforcement – Homeland Security Investigations; the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; U.S. Customs and Border Protection; U.S. Secret Service; the U.S. Marshals Service; New York National Guard; the Clarkstown Police Department; U.S. Coast Guard; Port Washington Police Department; and New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.

The investigation was initiated in response to community complaints about the open and notorious sale and consumption of narcotics along a busy commercial stretch of 3rd Avenue in Mott Haven, as well as violent incidents. During the time frame of the charged conspiracy, which ran from August 21, 2019 to February 12, 2020, members of the drug organization routinely discussed narcotics sales, proceeds of these sales and police activity by phone.

ACEVEDO's organization took over a legitimate business, a bakery located at 2785 3rd Avenue, and used it as a hub for narcotics sales. This business suffered as a result of persistent drug activity. Members of Strike Force Group Z-42 conducted surveillance and observed drug sales occurring openly on the sidewalk as well as inside the bakery. Members of the drug network conducted alleged drug sales from early morning until late in the evening and hid drugs and money inside the bakery. Drug customers frequently used narcotics in the immediate vicinity after the sales.

The investigation revealed that ACEVEDO maintained a strict hierarchy within his organization. When narcotic supplies ran low at the bakery, the alleged managers made trips to ACEVEDO's nearby residence at 383 East 143rd Street, located within the New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA) Mott Haven development. The residence served as an alleged stash location for narcotics and cash. Defendant Eugene SHEPHERD, aka "Gene," allegedly packaged narcotics for the organization at this location. On September 18, 2019, ACEVEDO and defendant Mark RODRIGUEZ, aka "Theo," discussed the theft of a large quantity of narcotics and cash proceeds from ACEVEDO's residence. Approximately \$80,000 in narcotics and cash was stolen.

An alleged top manager within the organization, Victor ALOMAR, aka "O," was arrested on September 30, 2019 at 385 East 144th Street by members of Strike Force Group Z-42 after meeting with ACEVEDO. He was found to be in possession of a "register" of narcotics consisting of 100 bags of cocaine and 100 glassine envelopes of heroin. The investigation revealed that ALOMAR continued to participate in the drug organization's activities while awaiting trial on two pending criminal cases. In a phone call on November 6, 2019, ALOMAR requested to regain his "senior status" within ACEVEDO's organization.

In a court authorized search of ACEVEDO's residence this morning, agents and officers recovered approximately \$50,000 cash and hundreds of glassine envelopes and ziplock bags containing suspected heroin and cocaine.

Defendants Damon ELLIS, aka "Roc," Antonio PAIGNE, aka "Santi," and Wilfredo ROJO ROCA are charged with supplying narcotics to ACEVEDO for distribution by members of his network from locations in the Bronx and Manhattan. PAIGNE also allegedly supplied narcotics to Ramon BANREY. On October 17, 2019, members of Strike Force Group Z-42 arrested defendant BANREY in the vicinity of 982 Prospect Avenue in Manhattan following a meeting with PAIGNE. BANREY was in possession of 200 glassine envelopes of heroin.

Court authorized searches of two locations associated with PAIGNE at 540 East 169th Street in the Bronx and 365 Edgecombe Avenue in Manhattan resulted in the seizure of two loaded guns and nearly a kilogram of suspected heroin and cocaine. The narcotics have been submitted to the DEA laboratory for testing.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan thanked her office’s Special Investigation Bureau, Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark and New York Strike Force Group Z-42, including members of U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) New York Division, the New York City Police Department, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) New York Field Office, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) New York and all of the other partner agencies for their work on the investigation.

“We hope these arrests bring relief to the beleaguered residents and business owners of Mott Haven who have endured brazen drug trafficking in this area for far too long,” Special Narcotics Prosecutor Brennan said.

“Throughout this case, our efforts focused on taking the community back from violent criminals whose drug trafficking and intimidation overflowed into the streets, homes, and local businesses,” said DEA Special Agent in Charge Ray Donovan. “When it comes down to it, every New Yorker has a right to live without fear of drug traffickers and the violence associated with their criminal trade. Law enforcement’s strategic collaboration, including the indictment of these 14 defendants, continues our pursuit to dismantle more and more local drug trafficking networks in New York and the Northeast.”

“With tenacious investigative work, we have taken down a sprawling narcotics operation that preyed on a Bronx neighborhood. I commend the police officers, federal agents and prosecutors who brought this case and work every day to stop those engaged in selling illegal drugs,” said Police Commissioner Dermot Shea.

“U.S. Customs and Border Protection is proud to partner with DEA, HSI, NYSP, and NYPD to help apprehend criminals posing a threat to the United States. CBP does its part in keeping these drugs off the streets and we are determined to protect our youth from these illicit substances,” said Mr. Troy Miller, Director of Field Operations New York.

“This case is one of many examples of how local, state and federal partners work together to combat drug traffickers and distributors of these deadly drugs,” said HSI New York Special Agent in Charge Peter C. Fitzhugh. “Supporting our federal, state and local partners will remain a top priority for HSI.”

Superintendent Keith M. Corlett said, “A long-term investigation has resulted in taking dangerous individuals off our streets and shutting down a large drug ring. These individuals had zero regard for the dangers they posed to our community; selling deadly drugs or the added, associated crimes that come with this illegal trade. I want to thank our partners for their continued dedication and hard work on these cases. We will continue to work together to make our streets and neighborhoods safer.”

Indicted Defendants	Charges
Damon Ellis, aka “Roc” Barnegat, NJ 11/20/1972	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct CSCS 1 st – 1 ct CSCS 2 nd – 1 ct
Eugene Shepherd, aka “Gene” Bronx, NY 9/19/1965	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct
Jack Acevedo, aka “Tone” Bronx, NY 11/29/1978	Operating as a Major Trafficker – 1 ct Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct CPCS 3 rd – 3 cts
Victor Alomar, aka “O” Bronx, NY 6/4/1967	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct CPCS 3 rd – 3 cts
Mark Rodriguez, aka “Theo” Bronx, NY 3/9/1968	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct

Oraya Evans, aka "Rhea" Bronx, NY 5/11/1975	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct
Julio Rodriguez, aka "Chubs" Jersey City, NJ 6/21/1981	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct
Durice Jones, aka "Jerry" Bronx, NY 9/15/1970	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct
Feliz Medina, aka "Gordo" Bronx, NY 12/26/1986	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct
Antonio Paigne, aka "Santi" New York, NY 1/17/1959	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Jesus Rivera, aka "Choco" Bronx, NY 3/27/1970	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct
Wilfredo Rojo Roca Bronx, NY 6/12/1957	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct
Ramon Banrey Bronx, NY 3/10/1946	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct

The charges and allegations are merely accusations and the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.