

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

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Ten Arrested in Staten Island Gang Takedown: Indictments Charge Heroin Trafficking and Shooting, Two Firearms Seized

New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan, Richmond County District Attorney Michael McMahon and New York City Police Commissioner William J. Bratton announced today the arrest and indictment of 10 individuals on Staten Island and in New Jersey as a result of a long-term investigation by the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) Staten Island Gang Squad (SIGS). The indictment brought by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor centers on heroin trafficking, a shooting and weapons possession. The Richmond County District Attorney's Office and the NYPD initiated the investigation.

Beginning early yesterday morning, approximately 120 members of the NYPD fanned out across Staten Island to make arrests. A majority of the defendants charged in the indictment operated in the West Brighton section of Staten Island, and are alleged to be members of the criminal street gang known as "WB Savages," affiliated with the Bloods gang.

Police conducted court authorized searches of several locations on Staten Island and seized numerous cell phones and other evidence. More than 2,000 individual dose glassine envelopes of heroin, with a street value of approximately \$20,000, were purchased by undercover officers during the yearlong investigation.

The indictment centers on two conspiracies: a conspiracy to sell and possess controlled substances and a conspiracy to criminally possess weapons. Charges include Conspiracy in the Fourth Degree, Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree, Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Firearm, Attempted Assault in the Second Degree and Tampering with Physical Evidence.

The defendants are scheduled to be arraigned before Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Ellen Biben in 100 Centre St., Part 43 beginning this morning. These arrests are a result of a wiretap investigation that was launched in August of 2015 and involved 28 sales of heroin to undercover NYPD officers.

Alleged ringleaders JAHIEK CHUNN, 32, and TRAVIS JOHNSON, 20, are charged with overseeing a crew of street-level heroin drug dealers comprised of members of "WB Savages," named for the West Brighton section of Staten Island that was their base of operations. Aside from CHUNN, members of the group range in age from 16 to 24.

As part of the narcotics conspiracy, CHUNN and TRAVIS allegedly shared a cell phone that they used to take orders for heroin from customers. The drug organization distributed heroin in the vicinity of the West Brighton Houses, a New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residential complex, and elsewhere.

The group's alleged heroin supplier, DARROL WATERMAN, 41, transported narcotics in his Jeep from Manhattan to Staten Island. TIMOTHY PHILLIPS, 36, worked for WATERMAN as a runner. Both WATERMAN and PHILLIPS reside in the Mariner's Harbor section of Staten Island.

Members of the group also conspired to possess firearms. On occasion they posted photos of themselves holding weapons and flashing gang signs on social media. Violence erupted on September 28, 2015, when CHUNN was targeted in a shooting in front of 169 Campbell Avenue. YOHANCE EATON, 18, allegedly returned fire at CHUNN's would-be shooter.

Police believe the incident, which was captured on video, stemmed from a dispute over the drug operation. Afterwards, EATON discussed the shooting in a recorded phone call, stating, "I started gonging at him... gong, gong, gong, gong, gong ... he lucky he got away." EATON is charged with Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree and Attempted Assault in the Second Degree as a result of this shooting.

More recently, on March 15, 2016, JOHNSON and others led police on a car chase through West Brighton. During the chase, officers observed JOHNSON toss two bags that contained over 15 grams of heroin out a window of the vehicle. JOHNSON subsequently discussed this incident in a recorded phone conversation, stating, "I had to toss my whole bomb. "

On April 8, 2016, members of NYPD's SIGS received information that JOHNSON and a second individual were armed. Police responded to a deli located at 251 Broadway in West Brighton and observed JOHNSON and the other individual inside. When police attempted to stop the two men they ran from the store. JOHNSON fled out the back of the store and jumped a fence, while the other individual shed his jacket and threw it behind a counter of the store.

Both escaped arrest. However, the two guns were later recovered – one from inside the store and the other from near the fence that JOHNSON had jumped over. Intercepted calls between JOHNSON and his associates led police to locate the second weapon.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan thanked the Richmond County District Attorney's Office, the New York City Police Department's Staten Island Gang Squad and her office's Special Investigations Bureau.

"This case reveals an inextricable link between narcotics trafficking and violence in New York City and our response demonstrates our commitment to eradicating it. Excellent police work and close collaboration between our office and the Richmond County District Attorney's Office dismantled a gang that, through reckless gun play, a shootout and heroin dealing, inflicted untold harm on residents of Staten Island," said Special Narcotics Prosecutors Bridget G. Brennan. "By transporting heroin from Manhattan and selling it to users on Staten Island, the defendants fueled a devastating drug epidemic that continues to escalate, claiming lives as a result of addiction and overdose. We are thankful to members of the Richmond County District Attorney's Office and the NYPD for their work on this investigation."

Richmond County District Attorney Michael McMahon said, "This joint takedown signifies a concerted effort to address the reign of violence, drugs, and lawlessness that these individuals are alleged to have wreaked on Staten Island. Make no mistake about it--we will prosecute those who callously destroy the lives of others whether through violence or drugs to the full extent of the law. I want to thank Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget Brennan, her team, and the NYPD for their great work in this investigation."

"As heroin overdoses continue to rise at an alarming rate, we will have precision focus on arresting those who ply this poison. As our investigation revealed and alleged in the court documents, the trafficking of this highly addictive heroin brought violence to our communities on Staten Island, particularly for those who call the West Brighton Houses home," said Police Commissioner William J. Bratton.

INDICTED DEFENDANTS	CHARGES
Jahiek Chunn New Brighton, Staten Island 4/27/1984	Conspiracy 4 th (CSCS 3 rd & CPCS 3 rd) – 1 ct Conspiracy 4 th (CPW 2 nd) – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 10 cts CPCS 3 rd – 4 cts CPW 2 nd – 2 cts
Travis Johnson West Brighton, Staten Island 8/18/1995	Conspiracy 4 th (CSCS 3 rd & CPCS 3 rd) – 1 ct Conspiracy 4 th (CPW 2 nd) – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 20 cts CPCS 3 rd – 7 cts CPCS 3 rd (weight) – 1 ct CPW 2 nd – 1 ct Tampering with Physical Evidence – 1 ct
Shaheem McLean West Brighton, Staten Island 6/23/1998	Conspiracy 4 th (CSCS 3 rd & CPCS 3 rd) – 1 ct Conspiracy 4 th (CPW 2 nd) – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 12 cts CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct Criminal Possession of a Firearm – 1 ct
Omari Eaton New Brighton, Staten Island 1/8/1991	Conspiracy 4 th (CSCS 3 rd & CPCS 3 rd) – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 2 cts CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Shalae Holt Port Richmond, Staten Island 2/14/1997	Conspiracy 4 th (CSCS 3 rd & CPCS 3 rd) – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 1 ct CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Yohance Eaton New Brighton, Staten Island 2/22/1998	Conspiracy 4 th (CSCS 3 rd & CPCS 3 rd) – 1 ct Conspiracy 4 th (CPW 2 nd) – 1 ct CPW 2 nd – 1 ct Attempted Assault 2 nd – 1 ct
Lynelle Farris West Brighton, Staten Island 1/8/1999	Conspiracy 4 th (CSCS 3 rd & CPCS 3 rd) – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 3 cts CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Darrol Waterman Mariner's Harbor, Staten Island 2/11/1975	Conspiracy 4 th (CSCS 3 rd & CPCS 3 rd) – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 4 cts CPCS 3 rd – 4 cts
Timothy Phillips Mariner's Harbor, Staten Island 3/22/1980	Conspiracy 4 th (CSCS 3 rd & CPCS 3 rd) – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 3 cts CPCS 3 rd – 3 cts
Jeffrey Register Mariner's Harbor, Staten Island 9/13/1996	CSCS 3 rd – 1 ct