



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

**For Immediate Release**  
**October 27, 2021**

**snpnyc.org**  
**@snpnyc**

**Contacts:**

Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office  
Kati Cornell  
(212) 815-0525

DEA New York Division  
Erin Mulvey  
(212) 337-2906

U.S. Postal Inspection Service  
Donna Harris  
(646) 717-3424

New York City Police Department  
John Miller  
(646) 610-6700

New York State Police  
Beau Duffy  
(518) 457-2180

## **Five Charged in Sophisticated Scheme to Mail Cocaine from Puerto Rico New York City inside Children's Lunchboxes**

An indictment filed by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor charges five individuals in a sophisticated conspiracy to smuggle millions of dollars in cocaine from Puerto Rico to New York and Massachusetts via the U.S. Postal Service. Intercepted packages contained a total of 30 kilograms of cocaine (over 66 pounds) concealed inside children's lunchboxes and school binders.

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, Ray Donovan, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) New York Division, Philip R. Bartlett, Inspector in Charge, U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), New York Division, New York City Police Commissioner Dermot F. Shea and New York State Police Superintendent Kevin P. Bruen announced the arrests today in conjunction with the unsealing the 25-count indictment. Arraignments for three of the five defendants are scheduled for this afternoon before Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Abraham Clott.

The long-term investigation was conducted by DEA's New York Drug Enforcement Task Force (NYDETF), Group T-41, and USPIS. NYDETF Group T-41 is comprised of agents and officers with the DEA, the NYPD and the New York State Police.

In carrying out the charged conspiracy, which ran from May of 2020 to July of 2021, accused ringleaders CARLOS DUARTE, a/k/a Showtime, and ALEXIS GARCIA, a/k/a/ Ale G., allegedly shipped numerous packages containing cocaine from Puerto Rico to New York and Massachusetts. The investigation revealed the two work as managers representing recording artists in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Both are residents of New York. Frequent travel in connection with this work allegedly served as a cover for narcotics-related activity.

Early this morning, agents, officers and inspectors arrested DUARTE at his home at 237 Hoover Avenue, Yonkers, N.Y. and recovered approximately 400 grams of a white powdery substance, some of which tested positive as cocaine in a field test, and multiple cellphones from the residence in a court-authorized search. GARCIA was arrested in front of a recording studio located at 281 S. Broadway in Yonkers. He had approximately \$12,000 on his person. A court authorized search of his home at 1500 Noble Avenue, Apt. 17A in the Bronx yielded another \$32,000 cash, various records and a Rolex watch. RUAL SWEENEY was arrested last night in the Bronx.

DUARTE faces the top narcotics charge of Operating as a Major Trafficker. Other charges contained in the indictment include, Conspiracy in the Second Degree, Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the First Degree, and Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First and Third Degrees. WESLEY CODDINGTON, a/k/a/ Lucky, and BRYAN CENTENO-ROSADO were arrested during the investigation and charged in criminal complaints. They are scheduled to be arraigned on the indictment on November 17, 2021.

While charges in the indictment relate to USPS packages containing approximately 15 kilograms of cocaine, the investigation resulted in the seizure of roughly twice that amount, for a total of 30 kilograms of cocaine. Agents, officers and inspectors employed a wide range of investigative tools, including the collection of latent fingerprints from USPS packages, physical and electronic surveillance, court authorized searches and various other investigative tools.

During the investigation, U.S. Postal Inspectors identified several hallmarks of packages sent by the organization, and uncovered a more extensive pattern involving 100 similar packages shipped since May of 2020. Packages were shipped to residential addresses in New York State, including in Manhattan, the Bronx, Queens and Greene County, as well as to Massachusetts. Often, the named recipients were either fictitious or were actual individuals not associated with the address. Frequently, the return addresses were in New York, despite the packages originating in Puerto Rico. At least two packages bore the return address of a luxury clothing boutique in Upper Manhattan.

Between May of 2020 and April of 2021, fingerprint analysis allegedly linked the defendants to six packages. DUARTE's fingerprints were allegedly found on two packages and GARCIA's on four, and CENTENO-ROSADO's on one of the packages associated with GARCIA. These USPS packages contained a total of eight kilograms of cocaine concealed inside children's lunchboxes and a zip binder. The lunchboxes bore images of popular cartoon characters.

On January 21, 2021, surveillance footage in Puerto Rico showed DUARTE shipping a USPS package destined for 2925 Colden Avenue in the Williamsbridge neighborhood of the Bronx, which is the residence of SWEENEY. Members of NYDETF observed the package being delivered to the Colden Avenue address on January 22, 2021. SWEENEY allegedly exited the residence with a gray shopping bag, discarded what appeared to be a white USPS box, and gave the bag to CODDINGTON. Members of NYDETF and USPIS observed CODDINGTON enter a vehicle and move around in the back seat. At 2:25 p.m., agents and officers stopped the vehicle in the vicinity of Astor Avenue and Boston Road and recovered approximately two kilograms of cocaine concealed in children's lunch boxes inside a hidden trap compartment in the back seat area. CODDINGTON also possessed a small quantity of fentanyl on his person. He was arrested and charged in a criminal complaint.

On April 14, 2021, agents and officers conducted a court-authorized search of CODDINGTON's residence at 21-27 149th Street in Flushing, Queens. The search yielded more than 18 pink zip lock bags containing cocaine, as well as \$4,000 cash, a Rolex watch, luxury sneakers, a luxury book bag and wallet, a kilo press (equipment used in packaging narcotics), three digital scales and cellphones.

Two weeks later, on April 28, 2021, agents and officers observed DUARTE receive a USPS package and drive in a white pickup truck. The following day, on April 29, 2021, members of NYDETF and USPIS tracked a package destined for 1871 Barnes Avenue in the Bronx. During surveillance, they observed a vehicle similar to DUARTE's white pickup truck near the location. At approximately 4:40 p.m., agents and officers observed CENTENO-ROSADO exit the location carrying a heavy duffel bag and get into a livery

car. Members of Group T-41 followed the car and stopped it in Yonkers, N.Y. Agents and officers recovered four kilograms of cocaine split between two lunchboxes, one gray and one red. The livery driver showed the car's destination as 237 Hoover Road in Yonkers, the residence of DUARTE. Cellphone communications between DUARTE and CENTENO-ROSADO indicate DUARTE ordered the livery car. CENTENO-ROSADO was arrested and charged in a criminal complaint.

On June 3, 2021, members of NYDETF stopped a car in which GARCIA was an occupant. A court-authorized search yielded approximately \$1,000 from the trunk of the vehicle, as well as two cellphones. A court-authorized search of the cell phones showed GARCIA and another individual allegedly engaged in narcotics-related conversation, with GARCIA sending a USPS receipt and the other individual sending a picture of a kilogram of cocaine. There were also discussions related to price and weight.

Later that month, DUARTE travelled to the U.S.-Mexico border in Texas and New Mexico. On June 21, 2021, he allegedly sent a USPS box listing his own name as both the recipient and sender.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan commended the work of her office's Special Investigations Bureau, the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, the DEA, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the NYPD, the New York State Police, and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York. She thanked Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr., Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark and Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz.

"Concealing narcotic drugs in children's lunchboxes was the modus operandi for this organization. If this tactic was designed to throw off law enforcement, it did not work. I commend the excellent investigation conducted with our partners for putting it out of business," said Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan.

"Cocaine continues to be an illegal drug anchored in New York," said DEA Special Agent in Charge Ray Donovan. "This drug conspiracy is representative of how a trafficking organization capitalized during Covid by using mail services to transport illegal drugs into New York. I applaud the proactive work conducted by the NYC Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, the US Postal Inspection Service, and the members of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force."

"Over the years we have seen many creative ways that drug traffickers conceal illegal narcotics in an effort to elude detection from law enforcement. Hiding narcotics in kid branded items is pathetic. Make no mistake, law enforcement will spare no resource to bring them to justice for their crimes in an effort to maintain the safety of the communities we serve," said Inspector in Charge Philip R. Bartlett.

"At the height of the ongoing pandemic, these alleged drug traffickers hid behind jobs in the music industry and shipped their cocaine in children's lunch boxes. But our NYPD investigators and partners in law enforcement weren't fooled and today's important indictment from the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor shows our unwavering commitment to keep New Yorkers from being victimized by crime," said Police Commissioner Dermot Shea.

Superintendent Kevin P. Bruen said, "This investigation speaks to the strong partnerships we have with our state, local and federal agencies, and to our commitment to keep dangerous drugs off our streets. The suppliers of illegal drugs are exploiting every channel they can to infiltrate our communities, including the U.S. Postal Service, this time using items geared towards children. With these arraignments, law enforcement is sending a message: No matter how you attempt to bring illegal drugs into our communities, we will find you and you will be held accountable."

---

**Defendants**

Carlos Duarte, a/k/a Showtime  
Age: 36  
Yonkers, NY

**Charges**

Conspiracy 2<sup>nd</sup> – 1 ct  
Operating as a Major Trafficker – 1 ct  
CPCS 1<sup>st</sup> – 5 cts  
CPCS 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5 cts

---

Alexis Garcia, a/k/a/ Ale G. Age: 41 Bronx, NY	Conspiracy 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 1 ct CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 4 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 4 cts
Wesley Coddington, a/k/a/ Lucky Age: 43 Queens, NY	Conspiracy 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 1 ct CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 1 ct CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 3 ct
Raul Sweeney Age: 27 Bronx, NY	Conspiracy 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 1 ct CSCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 1 ct CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 1 ct CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 1 ct
Bryan Centeno-Rosado Age: 23 Bronx, NY	Conspiracy 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 1 ct CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts

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