



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

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## Large-Scale Fentanyl Packaging Mill Dismantled in the Bronx: 11 Arrested and Indicted

### *Hundreds of Thousands of Potentially Lethal Doses Packaged for Distribution*

As part of an ongoing investigation into fentanyl trafficking in New York City, federal, state and local law enforcement officers disrupted an active drug packaging mill in the Bronx and recovered up to 400,000 packages of suspected fentanyl/heroin, plus quantities of loose powdered narcotics, carrying an estimated street value of \$4 million.

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, Frank A. Tarentino III, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) New York Division (NY), New York City Police Commissioner Edward A. Caban, Acting New York State Police Superintendent Dominick L. Chiumento, and Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark announced the arrest and indictment of 11 individuals in connection with the high-volume drug mill at 1244 Grand Concourse.

An indictment filed by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor (SNP) charges the 11 individuals with multiple counts of Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First and Third Degrees, and Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia in the Second Degree. Arraignments are scheduled for this afternoon before Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Miriam Best.

The investigation by members of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force (NYDETF) Group T-22 and SNP investigators identified 1244 Grand Concourse, Apartment 2B, as a suspected packaging mill location. Agents and officers dismantled the large-scale operation on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, preventing hundreds of thousands of potentially lethal doses of suspected fentanyl/heroin from hitting the streets. The NYDETF comprises agents and officers of the DEA, New York City Police Department (NYPD), and the New York State Police (NYSP).

**Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan** said, "This investigation highlights potential dangers from a fentanyl/heroin packaging mill operating in a residential building. Not only is exposure to lethal drugs a risk to innocent residents when a half million small packages of lethal drugs are bagged in a neighboring apartment, but their security may be compromised as well. Across the city, New Yorkers are suffering the loss of precious lives to deadly drugs, and are fed up with every aspect of fentanyl trafficking. We will continue to work with all our law enforcement partners to protect the safety

of our communities. I thank Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark, and commend DEA New York Division, the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, and my office's Special Investigations Bureau and Investigators Unit for their work on this case."

**DEA Special Agent in Charge Frank Tarentino** said, "Eleven members of a fentanyl/heroin trafficking ring were arrested as they fled the scene of a crime. They all ran from an active fentanyl mill filled with hundreds of thousands of deadly doses, but they couldn't hide, not even under solar panels on the roof. DEA and our law enforcement partners will stop at nothing to shut down drug traffickers who bring fentanyl into our communities, causing the most harm. I commend our partners in the NYPD, NYSP, and New York City Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office for their diligent work on this investigation."

**NYPD Commissioner Edward A. Caban** said, "By systematically targeting heroin and fentanyl supply sources like this one in the Bronx, the NYPD and our law enforcement partners are fulfilling our mission to save lives. Dismantling this operation and preventing these deadly drugs from reaching the streets and neighborhoods of New York is our latest success in advancing that mission. I commend our colleagues on the NYDETF and in the office of the New York City Special Narcotics Prosecutor for their ongoing commitment to use every tool at our disposal to eradicate drug trafficking networks and hold the criminals behind them to full account."

**Acting New York State Police Superintendent Dominick L. Chiumento** said, "We continue to work with our local and federal partners to target those who are funneling dangerous narcotics into our cities and communities. This investigation has shut down a major operation and removed deadly fentanyl and heroin from our streets. I want to thank NYDETF Group T-22 for their outstanding work. One by one, with the collaboration of all our law enforcement partners, we will continue to take down these drug mills, and stop the flow of these harmful narcotics at their source."

**Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark** said, "Fentanyl and heroin continue to flood the Bronx, as evidenced by the large supply found in an apartment, packaged and ready to be sold to thousands of drug users. We are so fortunate that our partners in the NY Drug Enforcement Task Force and Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget Brennan stopped this deadly stockpile from being distributed."

During the month-long investigation, members of NYDETF Group T-22 conducted both physical and electronic surveillance at 1244 Grand Concourse, Apartment 2B, and observed approximately 10 individuals going in and out of the apartment carrying bags and moving a glass top table, chairs, and other equipment.

On Wednesday, November 1, 2023, beginning at approximately 11 a.m., agents and officers allegedly observed Aremedis RIVERA enter 1244 Grand Concourse, followed by Juan RIVERA a few hours later. Both had previously been seen coming and going from the suspected mill location. Shortly before 5 p.m., Aremedis RIVERA allegedly exited the building carrying two large reusable shopping bags. He then climbed into a livery car, travelled seven blocks, and exited the vehicle in the vicinity of Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center. Agents and officers stopped him and secured the bags he was carrying.

Over the next hour, agents and officers observed Heriberto RIVERA walk out of 1244 Grand Concourse, followed by Luis LEDESMA. Both were allegedly among those previously been seen entering and exiting the location. Soon afterwards, a tenant in the building, who appeared to be agitated, came outside yelling about men attempting to enter his apartment.

Members of NYDETF Group T-22 ran into the building and apprehended another individual, John REYES, in the lobby. As the subjects of the investigation were fleeing, agents and officers entered 1244 Grand Concourse, Apartment 2B, and froze the location. Agents and officers apprehended Oscar TAVERAS, Juan RIVERA and Miguel DELACRUZ on the roof. Ivan CARLOS-SERRANO, Juan Albert SERRANO, Kelvin LEDESMA and Richard MANUEL-RIVERA were discovered hiding together under solar panels on the roof. Physical and electronic surveillance, as well as reviews of building security video, allegedly linked all 11 charged individuals to the alleged mill location.

At approximately 11:15 p.m., agents and officers conducted court-authorized searches of the two bags seized from Aremedis RIVERA. Inside the bags were approximately 100,000 glassine envelopes containing fentanyl/heroin, packaged into brick-shaped squares, wrapped in magazine paper.

Members of NYDETF Group T-22 also conducted a court-authorized search of 1244 Grand Concourse, Apartment 2B. Inside the living room, agents and officers recovered hundreds of thousands of glassines containing fentanyl from bags on the couch and the floor, and from the top of a glass top table and a second table. Quantities of loose powdered fentanyl were also recovered.

All of the equipment necessary for packaging fentanyl/heroin was present, including bags of cutting agents, a box filled with coffee grinders containing a white powdery substance, multiple scales, and stamps used for branding. Thousands of empty glassine envelopes were found in the apartment, including inside the oven. One technique mill workers allegedly use to speed up the process of filling glassines is to warm empty envelopes in an oven.

A field test on the drugs recovered indicated the presence of fentanyl in some of narcotics recovered. The result of DEA laboratory analyses are pending.

<b>Defendants</b>	<b>Charges</b>
Aremedis Rivera Age: 41 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts
Richard Manuel-Rivera Age: 28 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts
John Luis-Reyes Age: 36 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts
Oscar Taveras Age: 32 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts
Miguel Delacruz Age: 29 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts
Heirberto Rivera Age: 43 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts
Ivan Carlos-Serrano Age: 23 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts
Juan Rivera Age: 44 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts
Juan Serrano Age: 26 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts
Kelvin Ledesma Age: 26 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts
Luis Ledesma Age: 38 Bronx, NY	CPCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 cts CPCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 2 cts

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