

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

Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics Prosecutor

80 Centre Street, Sixth Floor
New York, NY 10013
212-815-0400, Gen
212-815-0440, Fax

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Contacts:

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

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

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

Eric Chaboty
Sullivan County Sheriff's Department
(845) 794-7100

Stephen Davis
New York City Police Department
(646) 610-6700

Lou Martinez
ICE HIS New York
(646) 230-3289

Major heroin supply chain from New York City to Upstate counties, Long Island dismantled: Five arrested, \$5 million in heroin, \$115,000 cash and two guns seized

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, James J. Hunt, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) New York Division, Joseph A. D'Amico, Superintendent of the New York State Police, Sullivan County Sheriff Michael Schiff, New York City Police Commissioner William J. Bratton and Raymond R. Parmer, Jr., Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) New York, announced the arrest of five members of a heroin trafficking network and the seizure of 12 kilograms of heroin (over 26 lbs.) worth at least \$5 million, plus \$115,000 in cash, two guns and drug paraphernalia.

The investigation began in October 2014, following a heroin overdose in Sullivan County, NY and ultimately led to the identification of a wholesale drug organization based in the Bronx and the Washington Heights section of Manhattan. The drug group supplied local dealers in New York City and Upstate New York counties, including Westchester, Orange, Sullivan and Albany, as well as Long Island.

The arrests and seizures, which occurred yesterday, were the result of a collaborative effort by the DEA's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force (NY OCDEF), Group Z-41, with leadership from the New York State Police, working in partnership with the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Heroin Interdiction Team (HIT) and Investigators Unit, the New York State Police, the New York City Police Department and HSI New York and the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office. Also assisting in the investigation were the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office, the Narcotics Unit of the Nassau County Police Department and the DEA's Long Island District Office. NY OCDEF, Group Z-41, was created specifically to fight the growing heroin epidemic in New York State.

ORLANDO ROSARIO-CONCEPCIO is accused of heading the Bronx and Washington Heights-based drug trafficking organization that supplied local dealers in New York City, Upstate counties and Long Island. The five arrests occurred at approximately 11:15 a.m. yesterday a heroin packaging mill at 238 West 238th St., Apt. 25, in the Bronx, which was fully operational at the time and was being overseen by ROSARIO-CONCEPCIO. Also present was RODOLOFO ABREU-CRISOTOMO, JONATHAN ALMONTE, JEAN CARLOS ROSARIO-ORTIZ and DECKSON HOLGUIN-ROSARIO.

Criminal complaints filed by the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office charge the defendants with Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First Degree, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree and Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia in the Second Degree. Arraignments are expected to take place this afternoon in Manhattan Criminal Court.

At the outset of the investigation, members of the NY OCDEF, Group Z-41, and the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office pursued leads connected to the overdose death. Sullivan County has faced a stark reality for over 24 months, as have communities across much of the state. Heroin overdoses have been on the rise, with burglaries and related crimes becoming the common scourge of small rural hamlets and villages. Rather than put a band aid on the heroin problem by making a few quick arrests in Sullivan County, Sheriff Michael Schiff decided to help tackle the problem at its source, which was the Bronx and Washington Heights.

Working together, NY OCDEF, Group Z-41, the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Heroin Interdiction Unit (HIT) and the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office tracked the heroin supply chain from distributors of glassine bags of heroin Upstate to the group in the Bronx and Washington Heights headed by ROSARIO-CONCEPCION, which was holding \$5 million in heroin yesterday at the time of the drug raids.

Agents and investigators identified active heroin mill locations, including the mill at 238 West 238th St., Apt. 25 in the Bronx, which churned out tens of thousands of individual dose glassine envelopes at a time. The location of the mill is just off Van Cortlandt Park, 13 blocks south of the sight of the record-breaking 70 kilogram heroin seizure on May 12. It is also within blocks of Manhattan College and the Fieldston School.

The investigation also led agents and investigators to multiple stash locations controlled by the organization, including the residence of ABREU-CRISTOMO at 20 Laurel Hill Terrace, Apt. 3K, in Manhattan.

Yesterday, agents and investigators with NY OCDEF, working in conjunction with Special Narcotics investigators and their law enforcement partners in New York State and New Jersey, conducted seven court authorized search warrants, including five in New York City, one in Long Island and one in Paterson, New Jersey.

Upon entering 238 West 238th St., Apt. 25, in the Bronx, agents and investigators interrupted workers in the act of packaging heroin into individual dose glassine envelopes. ROSARIO-CONCEPCION, ROSARIO-ORTIZ and ALMONTE were in the vicinity of the living room. Thousands of filled glassine envelopes of heroin and quantities of the drug in loose powder form were recovered, along with all of the equipment and paraphernalia necessary to operate the mill, such as empty glassine envelopes, scales and grinders.

Simultaneously, agents and investigators outside the fifth story apartment observed heroin being thrown out of a window. ABREU-CRISTOMO and HOLGUIN-ROSARIO then climbed out of another window onto a fire escape. HOLGUIN-ROSARIO broke into a neighboring apartment from the fire escape during the unsuccessful attempt at flight. Both were immediately apprehended.

A second court authorized search conducted at ABREU-CRISOTOMO's residence at 20 Laurel Hill Terrace, Apt. 3K, in Manhattan yielded approximately 11 kilograms of heroin (over 24 lbs.) Four

kilograms were in uncut brick form and seven kilograms had already been packaged into glassine envelopes. The investigation revealed that ABREU-CRISOTOMO allowed ROSARIO-CONCEPCION to use the apartment as a stash location for shipments of heroin, both before the heroin was transported to the mill for processing and after it was packaged for retail distribution.

Agents and investigators also searched the Paterson, NJ home of ROSARIO-CONCEPCION, located at 140 Belmont Ave., and recovered approximately \$100,000 USC as well as a loaded handgun. The Long Island warrant location at 1423 Chicago Ave., Bayshore, NY yielded approximately \$15,000 cash, 5,000 glassine bags of heroin, and a rifle.

Bridget G. Brennan said, "Sadly, an untimely death from a heroin overdose triggered this investigation, but as a result our collaborative efforts prevented more than a million bags of heroin from hitting the streets. The leadership and expertise of the law enforcement team that handled this case has greatly enhanced our ability to reduce heroin supplies throughout New York State."

"The heroin user population in the U.S. has almost doubled in a six year span, resulting in opioid addiction, heroin overdoses and too many deaths," stated DEA Special Agent in Charge James J. Hunt. "Heroin traffickers are a national threat and a parents' worst nightmare. Law enforcement at all levels are coming together to take back our communities from drug traffickers' grasps by dismantling their distribution organizations, one by one."

New York State Police Superintendent Joseph A. D'Amico said, "Following a nearly year-long investigation, a deadly heroin supply chain to Sullivan County has been cut off and dangerous drug dealers put behind bars. This Bronx supply operation fed heroin to upstate New York and led to overdose deaths. Through collaboration and great police work, law enforcement were able to identify the source of the dangerous drug, shut down a heroin mill and seize more than 12 kilos of heroin, guns and cash. As a result of these seizures and arrests, lives have been saved."

Sullivan County Sheriff Michael Schiff said, "Our preliminary investigation revealed that drug dealers from the Bronx were driving all the way up to the rural areas of Sullivan County to peddle their poison to our children," said the Sheriff. "Once we pinpointed the source, we called for assistance." Sullivan County Coroner Alan Kesten brought the problem to Sheriff Schiff's attention two years ago when he compiled statistics that showed that deaths from heroin overdoses in the county were exploding.

"We are thankful that the necessary resources were available from the DEA and the State, to tackle this problem in a timely manner," said the Sheriff.

Police Commissioner William J. Bratton said, "I want to thank all of our law enforcement partners involved in this investigation for holding these alleged narcotic traffickers responsible for manufacturing and distributing this highly addictive opiate, which continues to be the major contributing factor in overdose deaths throughout our state. These indictments send a clear message that we will not tolerate drug trafficking in the state of New York."

"As heroin use continues to plague our communities, our collaborative efforts as members of the Strike Force is a great way to fight back to stem the tide of this dangerous and deadly epidemic" said Raymond R. Parmer Jr., Special Agent in Charge of HSI New York. "By initiating an investigation from the street user and climbing the ladder to the distributor has proven to be a successful method to taking down heroin mills like the ones operated by this drug trafficking organization."

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan thanked her office's Heroin Interdiction Team (HIT) and Investigators Unit, the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force (NY OCDEF), Group Z-41, the DEA, the New York State Police, the NYPD, HSI New York, the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office, the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office and the Narcotics Unit of the Nassau County Police Department.

The DEA's New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force is comprised of agents and officers of the DEA, the New York City Police Department, Immigration and Customs Enforcement - Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the New York State Police, the U. S. Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Marshal Service, New York National Guard, the New York Department of Taxation and Finance, the Rockland County Sheriff's Office, the Clarkstown Police Department, Port Washington Police Department and New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.

DEFENDANTS	CHARGES
Orlando Rosario-Concepcion 140 Belmont Ave., 2 nd floor Paterson, NJ 10/20/1976	CPCS 1 st – 1 ct CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia – 1 ct
Rodolfo Abreu-Crisotomo 20 Laurel Hill Terrace, Apt. 3K New York, NY 5/17/1984	CPCS 1 st – 1 ct CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia – 1 ct
Jonathan Almonte 5000 Broadway, Apt. 2B New York, NY 5/3/1988	CPCS 1 st – 1 ct CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia – 1 ct
Jean Carlos Rosario-Ortiz 325 Wadsworth Ave., Apt. 1C New York, NY 9/28/1987	CPCS 1 st – 1 ct CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia – 1 ct
Deckson Holguin-Rosario 34 Lauren Hill Terrace, Apt. 4X New York, Ny 2/15/1987	CPCS 1 st – 1 ct CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia – 1 ct

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