

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

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**For Immediate Release
September 26, 2016**

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17 Arrested and Two Firearms Seized Following East Harlem Drug Gang Investigation: Sales near Schools and Playground

New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan and New York City Police Commissioner James P. O'Neill announced today the arrest 17 individuals as a result of a long-term investigation into round-the-clock narcotics sales in the vicinity of the AK Houses, a privately-owned affordable housing complex in East Harlem, Manhattan. The Crime Strategies Unit for the office of New York County District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr. assisted in the investigation.

Over the past two weeks, members of the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) Narcotics Borough Manhattan North arrested 17 individuals at the AK Houses and residences elsewhere in Upper Manhattan and the Bronx. Many of these individuals are allegedly associated with a drug trafficking gang known as "No Sleep Get Money" or "N\$GM."

The NYPD initiated the investigation, dubbed "Operation Insomnia," in November 2015 in response to community complaints about narcotics trafficking in the area and a rash of gang-related shootings at the AK Houses. At least five shootings took place in front of the AK Houses over the past year.

During the 10-month investigation, members of "No Sleep Get Money" conspired to conduct crack-cocaine sales in the lobbies, hallways and stairwells of the AK Houses. At all hours of the day and night, brazen drug traffickers met with customers on sidewalks in front of the residential complex and in close proximity to a playground and three schools – public schools P.S. 30 Hernandez/Hughes and P.S. 138 / M.S.138, and charter school Success Academy Harlem 2. The defendants sold crack-cocaine to undercover officers on approximately 20 occasions, with the majority of these transactions set up by cell phone.

Thirteen defendants were arrested on charges contained in four indictments filed by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor. Charges include Conspiracy in the Fourth Degree and Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree. To date, 10 indicted defendants have been arraigned in Manhattan Supreme Court. Arraignments are pending for two indicted individuals who were incarcerated on previous charges at the time of the arrests.

While conducting a series of court authorized searches on September 15, 2016, police seized two loaded firearms at 112 East 128th Street, Apt. 8L in the AK Houses, the residence of indicted defendant MATTHEW JONES. The guns – a .38 caliber firearm and a 9 mm firearm – were recovered from inside a dresser drawer in a bedroom where a one-year-old child was present. Also in the bedroom, police recovered ammunition for both weapons, a quantity of cocaine and drug paraphernalia. Three other children were in another bedroom.

MATTHEW JONES is scheduled to be arraigned today before Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Neil E. Ross on an indictment that contains charges of Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree. A separate criminal complaint charges JONES with Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree, Criminal Possession of a Firearm and Unlawful Possession of Ammunition in connection with the two seized firearms. He and STEPHANIE GRIFFIN, who also resides at 112 East 128th Street, Apt. 8L, are together charged with Unlawfully Dealing with a Child and drug crimes as a result of the court authorized search of the apartment.

GRIFFIN was among four defendants who were charged in criminal complaints following the court authorized searches and arraigned in Manhattan Criminal Court.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan thanked her office's Trial Division, the New York County District Attorney's Office's Crime Strategies Unit and the New York City Police Department's Narcotics Borough Manhattan North.

"Finding decent affordable housing is challenging enough for low income Manhattan residents, without facing daily threats posed by warring gangs and around the clock drug trafficking. AK Houses provides desperately needed subsidized housing, but became the site of multiple shootings and nonstop drug dealing, putting hard working families in peril," Bridget G. Brennan said. "Today's arrests and indictments demonstrate zero tolerance for this dangerous criminal activity, and our commitment to ensure the safety of every neighborhood in the city."

NYPD Commissioner James P. O'Neill said, "This investigation started last year as a result of quality of life complaints from members of the community, among other things, about constant drug dealing in their apartment buildings and near schools. What followed was ten months of precision policing in the neighborhood. We identified the bad guys. We conducted drug buys using undercover officers. And we then arrested 17 people, resulting in the recovery of two illegal firearms. I want to thank the NYPD's law enforcement partners – the City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office – for their work on this investigation, which is bringing relief to the residents of the AK Houses and the nearby school community in East Harlem."

INDICTED DEFENDANTS	CHARGES
Jerome Isaacs 107 East 126 th Street, Apt. 4T New York, NY 05/31/1990	Conspiracy 4 th – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 2 cts
Quandell Hickman 08/28/1991	Conspiracy 4 th – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 2 cts
Yusuf Hairston 83 West 115 th Street, Apt. 3D New York, NY 12/21/1992	Conspiracy 4 th – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Larenz Malloy 112 East 128 th Street, Apt. 12F New York, NY 10/05/1994	Conspiracy 4 th – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 3 cts

August Greene 107 East 126 th Street, Apt. 11E New York, NY 05/19/1993	Conspiracy 4 th – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 2 cts
Travis Taylor 107 East 126 th Street, Apt.9T New York, NY 06/06/1990	Conspiracy 4 th – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Mitchell McPhee 04/08/1987	Conspiracy 4 th – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Adrian Massiah 1696 Vyse Avenue, Apt. 3G Bronx, NY 01/29/1989	Conspiracy 4 th – 1 ct CSCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Matthew Jones 112 East 128 th Street, Apt. 8L New York, NY 10/20/1987	CSCS 3 rd – 4 cts
Jamal Gomez 107 East 126 th Street, Apt. 5F New York, NY 08/26/1998	CSCS 3 rd – 3 cts
Tyheem Etheridge 123 East 112 th Street, Apt. 14E New York, NY 06/13/1996	CSCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Daikwan Carter 405 East 105 th Street, Apt. 15B New York, NY 03/06/1995	CSCS 3 rd – 1 ct
Malik Breedlove 112 East 128 th Street, Apt. 5K New York, NY 04/01/1996	CSCS 3 rd – 1 ct

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