

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

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## **Drug trafficking ring dismantled in Brooklyn's Cypress Hills Houses: 32 charged**

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, New York City Police Commissioner RAYMOND W. KELLY and Kings County District Attorney CHARLES J. HYNES announced today the arrests of 32 individuals as the result of an eight-month investigation into cocaine and heroin trafficking at the Cypress Hills Houses, a New York City Housing Authority complex located in the East New York section of Brooklyn.

NYPD's Brooklyn North Narcotics Division and the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office launched the investigation in December 2011 in response to community complaints about narcotics activity and escalating gang-related violence. More than a dozen shootings, including two homicides, have taken place in the vicinity of the Cypress Hills Houses since November 2010. The violence stems from a dispute between Blood and Crip-related crews. Police are continuing to investigate whether several of the defendants charged in the narcotics investigation are involved in the gangs.

Between December 7, 2011 and July 18, 2012, undercover NYPD officers purchased narcotics on 27 occasions inside the lobbies, hallways, stairwells and elevators of the housing complex. The sales ranged from \$20 to \$110 each and involved primarily crack-cocaine and heroin, as well as two sales of powder cocaine.

The majority of the arrests in the case took place on Friday, Aug. 10, when NYPD officers conducted court authorized searches of 12 apartments in the Cypress Hills Houses. A final defendant surrendered this morning.

Special Narcotics indictments charge three of the drug traffickers with multiple counts of Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance. One of these three, DAVID VASQUEZ, is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Manhattan Supreme Court before Judge Laura A. Ward.

VASQUEZ has been in custody since July 28, when police arrested him in connection with the July 2 shooting of an innocent bystander. VASQUEZ was engaged in a shoot-out with a rival and fired two

bullets that struck a woman in the leg and big toe. In the weeks that followed the shooting, Special Narcotics used intelligence gathered in the course of the narcotics investigation to locate VASQUEZ, who was apprehended by the NYPD's 75<sup>th</sup> Precinct.

The Kings County District Attorney's Office is prosecuting VASQUEZ for attempted murder and other related charges, while a Special Narcotics indictment charges him in connection with two sales of crack-cocaine to an undercover officer.

A second Special Narcotics indictment charges a pair of heroin traffickers, AL MCLAUGHLIN and MICHAEL HICKS, with multiple sales to undercover officers. MCLAUGHIN was arrested on July 31 and HICKS on Friday. Additionally, the defendant who surrendered this morning, ROY WINDELL, and a fifth drug trafficker, TYSON BENNETT, will also be prosecuted for Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance by Special Narcotics.

Twenty-seven defendants face misdemeanor charges after NYPD officers arrested them during court authorized searches on Friday and are being prosecuted by the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office.

Home to approximately 3,500 residents, the Cypress Hills Houses are comprised of 15 buildings and bordered by South Linden Boulevard, North Sutter Avenue, East Euclid Avenue and West Fountain Avenue.

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN thanked the NYPD's Brooklyn North Narcotics Division and Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes for their work on this case.

INDICTED DEFENDANTS	CHARGES
Michael Hicks 1250 Sutter Ave. 2/25/1957	CSCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 cts
Al McLaughlin, aka Brother 700 Euclid Ave., Apt. 1D 4/30/1951	CSCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 5 cts
David Vasquez, aka D-Block, Jay 335 Fountain Ave., Apt. 4D 7/6/1987	CSCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 cts

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