

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

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**For Immediate Release**  
**August 31, 2011**

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## **Chelsea Drug Gang Dismantled: Heroin, Cocaine, Pills and Two Guns Sold**

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, and New York City Police Commissioner RAYMOND W. KELLY announced today the indictment and arrests of three drug traffickers who sold drugs and guns in the vicinity of the Chelsea Houses, a New York City Housing Authority complex located in the Chelsea section of Manhattan. The main defendant in the group, Epifanio Santiago, is charged with selling heroin, cocaine, crack, oxycodone pills and two guns during seven meetings with undercover detectives.

The NYPD's Manhattan South Narcotics Division launched the investigation in April in response to community complaints about drug activity and gang-related violence at Chelsea Houses.

Yesterday evening, police arrested Santiago, aka "Frenchie", at the corner of W. 23rd Street and 9th Avenue as he prepared to make a final sale at 6:30 p.m. He was in possession of eight grams of crack, five grams of heroin and \$382. A search of his apartment at 425 W. 25th Street yielded crack pipes and a small quantity of marijuana.

Two additional indicted defendants, who acted as look-outs for Santiago and assisted him in making the sales, were also taken into custody. David Rodriguez, aka "Red" and "D-Blood", was arrested at 8 p.m. last night in front of 446 W. 26th Street. Deion Alonzo, aka "Saint" and "Peso", was arrested on Friday, August 26.

The majority of the sales in the four-month investigation took place near a playground within the Chelsea Houses, including the two sales that involved firearms. The elementary school Chelsea Prep, P.S. 33, is also located approximately two blocks away.

In the largest sale, on June 23, Santiago sold over 200 glassines of heroin and 2 ounces of highly-pure cocaine for \$4,000. Santiago brought his infant daughter along for this sale and stashed the drugs inside the baby's stroller and diaper bag in order to avoid drawing attention from law enforcement.

At a prearranged meeting place outside of the housing complex at the corner of 25th Street and 8th Avenue, Santiago pulled the heroin from the diaper bag. A second drug dealer who accompanied Santiago, Deion Alonzo, retrieved the cocaine from the stroller and passed it to Santiago, who then completed the sale. In addition to narcotics-related charges, Santiago and Alonzo each face one count

of Endangering the Welfare of a Child.

That same month, Santiago sold a shotgun, 77 oxycodone pills, and 49 glassines of heroin together for \$1,350. In another sale, a second gun – this one a .32 caliber handgun – was sold along with 40 glassines of heroin and 20 grams of cocaine for \$1,420.

Santiago was primarily a heroin dealer, but he brokered deals for other types of drugs. When a customer requested cocaine or oxycodone, Santiago obtained the drug from another dealer and also carried out the sale.

In total, Santiago sold nearly \$11,400 in drugs and guns during the investigation. Oxycodone pills were priced at approximately \$15 each. A bundle of 10 glassines of heroin sold for approximately \$80, while a gram of cocaine went for \$40.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan commended Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Sheetz and the NYPD's Manhattan South Narcotics Division for their work in this case.

INDICTED DEFENDANTS	CHARGES
Deion Alonzo (aka Peso and Saint) 04/16/88 274 E. 93 <sup>rd</sup> St.	CSCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 1 ct Endangering the Welfare of a Child – 1 ct
Epifanio Santiago (aka Frenchie) 12/01/66 425 W. 25 <sup>th</sup> St., apt. 20D	CSCS 1 <sup>st</sup> – 1 ct CSCS 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 4 cts CSCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 8 cts CSFA 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 1 ct CPW 4 <sup>th</sup> – 1 ct Endangering the Welfare of a Child – 1 ct
David Rodriguez (aka Red and D-Blood") 07/13/93 206 W. 148 <sup>th</sup> St.	CSCS 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 1 ct

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