



**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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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Magda Gandasegui, Director of Public Information**

**mgandasegui@specnarc.org**

**(212) 815-0525**

**ARRESTS AND INDICTMENTS OF CRACK/COCAINE DEALERS AT THE STRAUSS  
HOUSES**

New York City Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan announced that indictments were unsealed today charging five defendants with crack and powdered cocaine sales at the Strauss Houses, a New York City Housing Authority complex located at 228 and 344 East 28th Street in the Kips Bay section of Manhattan. On Friday evening, February 1, 2008 police personnel from NYPD Manhattan South Narcotics arrested 25 targets of the investigation including those named in the indictment as well as five others who will be charged with felony drug sales, the rest face misdemeanor charges. Five of those apprehended on Friday were Strauss Houses residents who used their apartments to conduct sales and stash drugs. Among them were Yolanda Acevedo, her son Jonathan Garcia and her daughter Ashlee Garcia, who sold drugs to undercover officers on multiple occasions.

The ten-month long joint investigation targeted narcotics sales at the two 19 and 20-stories buildings which are home to 522 people. The operation included more than 30 undercover drug buys and documented ongoing drug sales from morning till late at night, and a daily flow of hundreds of drug users who came and went in and out of the buildings lining up in hallways and stairways outside apartments to buy mostly one or two dime bags of crack or cocaine at a time.

At least three complex apartments were identified as drug locations, including apartment 13G of 224 East 28th Street, the residence of defendant James Keenan where crack was cooked and smoked openly. Since the beginning of the investigation in April 2007, more than 50 community complaints were recorded from the law abiding residents of the complex who had grown tired of living in fear and confinement as a result of the high-volume narcotics trafficking. In addition to Friday's arrests, search operations resulted in the recovery of felony quantities of cocaine.

INDICTED	CHARGES
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Tara Lawlor	7 Counts: CSCS 3rd Degree
James Keenan	1 Count: CSCS 3rd Degree
Michael O'Shea	2 Counts: CSCS 3rd Degree
Yolanda Acevedo	5 Counts: CSCS 3rd Degree
Ashlee Garcia	1 Count: CSCS 3rd Degree