



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

PRESS RELEASE

March 12, 2009

Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor

Magda Gandasegui

mgandasegui@specnarc.org

(212) 815-0525

New York City Police Department
Deputy Commissioner Paul Brown
646-610-6700

Drug Enforcement Administration
Erin McKenzie-Mulvey
212-337-2906
Erin.L.McKenzie-Mulvey@usdoj.gov

Nassau County Police Department
Lt. Kevin Smith
516-573-7135
arepalone@pdcn.org
ksmith@pdcn.org

ROMAN BROTHERS INDICTED

New York City Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan, Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, Drug Enforcement Administration Special Agent in Charge John Gilbride and Nassau County Police Commissioner Lawrence W. Mulvey announced the indictment of the head of a family-run heroin enterprise accusing him and four other members of a conspiracy to sell and distribute thousands of dollars worth of heroin in New York City and Nassau County.

Chris Roman was arraigned in New York County Supreme Court today, on an indictment, unsealed today, which charged him with being one of the leaders of the ring. Roman was arrested in Florida on Thursday, March 12, 2009. He waived extradition was arraigned earlier today before Judge Michael Ambrecht. At the time of his arrest, DEA agents spotted him in a white Bentley rental car.

Other defendants named in the conspiracy include Chris Roman's two brothers, Diomedes (Metro) and Jesus (Pharo) Roman, Jesus' wife Sybill Roman, and associate Joel Santiago. They were arrested on March 12 in Queens and Brooklyn.

The Roman brothers were at the center of a network distributing hundreds of bundles of glassines of heroin a month, netting upwards of \$70,000 monthly. The heroin was sold to street dealers or distributed to workers in pre-packaged "sleeves" containing 100 glassines at prices ranging from \$600 to \$1000 per sleeve or in bundles of 10 glassines. In Nassau County the price per glassine was as high as \$25.

NYPD undercover officers bought sleeves of heroin glassines on 19 different occasions from Jesus, Diomedes and Sybill Roman, and Joel Santiago. The latter also sold cocaine to undercover officers. When the Nassau County Police Department identified Chris Roman as a source of heroin in their jurisdiction the investigations were combined. Heroin use by young people in Nassau Counting has been escalating and has become the focus of concentrated enforcement efforts there.

Arrests and seven search warrant operations, which included searches of 93-19 74th Place in Queens, where 600 glassines of heroin and over \$35,500 were recovered; 127 Ridgewood Avenue in Brooklyn where 750 glassines of heroin, 5 ounces of cocaine, 200 ecstasy pills, and drug paraphernalia was seized; 2025 Regent Place, Apt C8 in Brooklyn which yielded drug paraphernalia.

Photographs the defendants posted about their automobile club, "Above Da Rest," in MySpace helped in their identification. The photographs showed them wearing leather jackets with the club's emblem and their street names.

Four vehicles seized were equipped with hydraulic traps; which are used to transport narcotics and money Police recovered cocaine and approximately \$1,000 from a trap in a Cadillac Escalade; a spent AK47 shell casing from a Toyota RAV-4 trap; heroin from the concealed compartment of a Ford Expedition; and 800 glassines of heroin in a Honda Accord.

Earlier in the investigation, after issuing a summons for parking in front of a fire hydrant, a police officer from the 103rd Precinct recovered 600 glassines of heroin from inside another Honda Accord belonging to the organization. A Mercedes Benz and two motorcycles were also recovered.

DEA Special Agent in Charge John Gilbride stated, "This heroin trafficking organization could rightly be called a "Family Affair". Similar to a mom and pop business they ran their drug operation as a family business. Due to concerted law enforcement efforts this drug trafficking "Family" has been shut down and is no longer operational, taking one more drug trafficking organization off the streets of New York City."

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Brennan said: "This case demonstrates that dealers are businessmen who will market their drugs for the highest price they can get. The young people in Long Island

paid 15 dollars more for a glassine of a minuscule amount of heroin than buyers in New York City who could get the same amount for \$10.”

"This successful heroin investigation which resulted in the arrests of a major drug trafficking organization headed by the Roman brothers is indicative of how the law enforcement community can work together in identifying and apprehending drug dealers who endanger not only our young people, but the entire community. We will continue to utilize our collective resources to aggressively pursue these criminals to the full extent of the law" Police Commissioner Lawrence W. Mulvey, Nassau County Police Department.

Joel Santiago's bail was set at \$350,000; Jesus Roman was remanded and bail was set for his brother Diomedes Roman, Jr., at \$250,000. Sybill Roman was released on her own recognizance.

The following defendants were named in the indictment:

Chris Roman, 25 93-19 74th Place Queens, NY 11421	Conspiracy 2nd Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance 3rd Degree
Joel Santiago, 25 127 Ridgewood Avenue Degree Brooklyn, NY 11208 Degree	Conspiracy 2nd Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance the 1st, 2nd Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance 2nd, 3rd
Diomedes Roman, Jr., 30 93-19 74th Street Queens, NY 11421	Conspiracy 2nd Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance 2nd Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance 3rd Degree
Jesus Roman, 28 2025 Regent Pl Degree Brooklyn, NY 11226	Conspiracy 2nd Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance 1st and 3rd Criminal Sale of a Firearm
Sybill Roman, 29 2025 Regent Pl Brooklyn, NY 11226	Conspiracy 2nd Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance 3rd Degree

All defendants were charged with Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia in the Second Degree. Defendants retain the presumption of innocence until proven guilty.