

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

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New Scoreboard Unveiled at Wadleigh Secondary School: Funded through Seized Narcotics Proceeds

Ceremony at 3 p.m. today, followed by community basketball game

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, New York City Police Commissioner William J. Bratton, Frederick J. Watts, Executive Director of New York City's Police Athletic League (PAL), and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Vice President for Community Operations Deidre Gilliard announced today the unveiling of a new scoreboard and 24-second clocks at Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Harlem.

The unveiling ceremony will take place this afternoon at 3 p.m. at the high school, located at 215 West 114th Street, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues. Financial support is derived from drug trafficking proceeds obtained during criminal prosecutions by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor.

Following the ceremony, a community basketball game will take place between the Wadleigh varsity boys' team and police officers from the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) 28th Precinct and Police Service Area 5 (PSA5) Housing Bureau.

Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing and Visual Arts is located adjacent to the A. Philip Randolph Houses, a NYCHA housing development, which has historically been the site of open drug markets. In 2013, the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office the NYPD's Narcotics Bureau Manhattan North spearheaded enforcement efforts to dismantle narcotics groups in the area. Over the course of a year, detectives successfully identified drug traffickers who regularly operated on the block, including street-level dealers and managers.

In October 2013, six of those individuals were indicted and arrested, including two brothers who together oversaw a narcotics operation. Additionally, the investigation identified a vacant apartment in 269 West 114th Street that drug dealers use as a headquarters for the preparation of crack-cocaine, the collection of money, and as a safe haven from law enforcement.

By supporting recreational programs, the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office joins in a cooperative effort to strengthen the community in the wake of enforcement activity and to build relationships between young people and law enforcement. This program is the result of a successful collaboration between law enforcement, PAL, NYCHA, the New York City Department of Education, and community members dedicated to protecting the safety of residents and improving the quality of life for the city's youth.

New York City's Police Athletic League is the first and finest civilian-run PAL in the country. Founded in 1914, PAL has served the city's young people for over 100 years. PAL provides recreational, educational, cultural and social activities to 35,000 boys and girls annually. It is also the city's largest, independent, nonprofit youth organization. For more information, please visit www.palnyc.org.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan said, "It is a pleasure to put forfeited drug proceeds to good use by providing support to the youth of Wadleigh Secondary School in the form of new athletic equipment. We look forward to participating in many future programs with the Police Athletic League and all of our partner agencies to provide safe and fun recreational opportunities for the young people of New York City."

Police Commissioner William J. Bratton said, "The NYPD is proud to work closely with the Police Athletic League of New York City and to collaborate with our law enforcement partners and city agencies to make possible this contribution to the Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Harlem. It is deeply gratifying to see drug trafficking proceeds used to benefit the local community and foster a deeper connection with the youth of this city."

PAL Executive Director Frederick J. Watts said, "I am excited that the Special Narcotics Prosecutor continues her office's great partnership with PAL, supporting our role in bringing quality programs to community youth. PAL's collaboration with Ms. Brennan's office, the NYPD, and NYCHA, not only promotes crime prevention, but strengthens relationships between law enforcement and the community."

Deidre Gilliard, NYCHA Vice President for Community Operations, said, "I commend Ms. Brennan as well as Commissioner Bratton and PAL Executive Director Watts on bringing this scoreboard and countdown clock to Wadleigh Secondary School in Harlem. Considering that the funding for this equipment was secured through criminal prosecutions, this is a real example of how the result of negative activity meant to weaken communities can be redirected to instead rebuild them. The youth of nearby A. Philip Randolph Houses will benefit from this recreational space, and on behalf NYCHA Chair Shola Olatoye, I join you in celebrating this achievement in community- law enforcement collaboration."