



U.S. Department of Justice

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**11 MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES OF THE "BULLY GANG" CHARGED WITH RACKETEERING OFFENSES**

***A Current and a Former New York City Department of Correction Officer Also Arrested***

A third superseding indictment was unsealed today in federal court in Brooklyn charging 11 members and associates of the violent New York City-based street gang known as the "Bully Gang" with racketeering for their role in multiple crimes, including attempted murder, armed robbery, narcotics trafficking, bribery, extortion and money laundering. Charges against multiple co-conspirators were also unsealed, including a New York City Department of Correction (DOC) officer and a former DOC officer who are charged with participating in a drug trafficking conspiracy led by the founder and leader of the Bully Gang which trafficked drugs into DOC facilities. Six defendants were arrested in the New York area today and will be arraigned via videoconference this afternoon before United States Magistrate Judge Vera M. Scanlon. The remaining defendants will be arraigned at a later date.

Seth D. DuCharme, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, John B. DeVito, Special Agent-in-Charge, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, New York Field Division (ATF), Dermot F. Shea, Commissioner, New York City Police Department (NYPD), and Margaret Garnett, Commissioner, New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced the arrests and charges.

"For years, members and associates of the Bully Gang have committed brutal and wanton acts of violence while spreading the poison of dangerous and illicit drugs throughout communities and even correctional institutions," stated Acting United States Attorney DuCharme. "Thanks to the tireless efforts of our law enforcement partners, today's charges mark significant progress towards permanently neutralizing the Bully Gang and dismantling its destructive drug-trafficking network."

"Today, a sophisticated criminal network, committing acts of violence, trafficking in firearms, and distributing dangerous narcotics across the east coast has been dismantled. Thanks to the unwavering efforts of the ATF/NYPD Joint Firearms Task Force,

these Bully Gang members and their associates are off the streets and facing lengthy prison sentences, where they will no longer be a threat to public safety,” stated ATF Special Agent-in-Charge DeVito.

“This investigation deals a substantial blow to gang violence on our City streets and demonstrates the critical need to uphold integrity as a City employee and in all City operations. As charged, these current and former City Correction officers used the access and influence of their position to traffic dangerous drugs from the Bully Gang to inmates on Rikers Island in exchange for bribes, undermining the safety of the City's jails and that of their fellow officers. DOI is proud to partner with the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, the ATF, and the NYPD on this important investigation and we will continue to work together to protect our City jails from contraband smuggling,” stated DOI Commissioner Garnett.

As set forth in the indictment and other court filings, the defendants used force and violence to promote their power, terrorize surrounding communities and enrich themselves and their members. For example, in June 2018, Moeleek Harrell, the founder and leader of the Bully Gang, conspired with Derrick Ayers, another member, to murder a perceived “rival” of the gang, whom Harrell later shot at multiple times on a street in Brooklyn. Harrell’s leadership of the gang continued even after his incarceration at Rikers Island, where he led a drug trafficking, bribery and money laundering scheme responsible for smuggling drugs into the jail through the use of conspirators and the payment of bribes to correctional officers.

As alleged, the defendants also operated a years-long, sophisticated drug trafficking network responsible for trafficking large quantities of dangerous drugs like cocaine base (“crack”), heroin and fentanyl through New York to Maine, and elsewhere. As alleged, the gang’s leaders sent Brooklyn-based drug dealers, including Bully Gang members and associates, from New York to Maine to operate “trap” houses where narcotics were stored and sold. The organization’s drug proceeds were collected on a regular basis and laundered through financial transactions and the purchase of high-value assets, including jewelry and cars. During the investigation, law enforcement seized more than \$380,000 in cash, more than 15 firearms, six kilograms of cocaine, 600 grams of fentanyl, multiple luxury watches and four vehicles with concealed “trap” compartments installed.

In the summer of 2020, Bully Gang members Franklin Gillespie and Latrell Johnson committed a spree of gunpoint robberies, displaying firearms to victims on the street in lower Manhattan to overpower them. In 2020 and 2021, Johnson also extorted a local business in Brooklyn, brandishing a firearm as part of the extortion scheme.

Between June 2019 and June 2020, Johnny Chiles, currently employed by DOC as an officer, and then-DOC officer Darius Murphy accepted payments from gang associates in exchange for delivering papers soaked in synthetic cannabinoids to inmates at Rikers Island.

The charges in the indictment are allegations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

The government’s case is being handled by the Office’s Organized Crime and Gangs Section and Public Integrity Section. Assistant United States Attorneys Drew G. Rolle,

Nicholas J. Moscow and Lindsey R. Oken and Special Assistant United States Attorney Virginia T. Nguyen, are in charge of the prosecution.

**New Defendants:**

KASSIN APPLING (also known as “Killa” and “Kassim”)

Age: 34

Brooklyn, New York

JOHNNY CHILES

Age: 36

Brooklyn, New York

RONALD DAVIS (also known as “Ronno”)

Age: 29

Brooklyn, New York

BRITTANY DUNCAN

Age: 26

Bayonne, New Jersey

NEHEMIE ERIL (also known as “Poca”)

Age: 24

Orange, New Jersey

LARON ESTRADA (also known as “Yetta”)

Age: 27

Brooklyn, New York

ROBERT HOLT (also known as “Ricky” and “Ghost”)

Age: 33

Brooklyn, New York

DARIUS MURPHY

Age:

Brooklyn, New York

TERRELL RATLIFF (also known as “Rello”)

Age: 29

Brooklyn, New York

JAMEL SMITH

Age: 23

Bronx, New York

**Defendants Previously Indicted:**

JESSICA ALMEIDA

Age: 33

Detroit, Maine

DERRICK AYERS (also known as “Dee” and “Mel”)

Age: 34

Rahway, New Jersey

TYRONE BANKS (also known as “Ty Hitta”)

Age: 23

Brooklyn, New York

JANET BLOOD

Age: 47

Troy, Maine

DAYVON BOSTICK-SAMUELS (also known as “Daytoe”)

Age: 22

Brooklyn, New York

BERMON CLARKE (also known as “G” and “Blue”)

Age: 28

Rahway, New Jersey

MIKE GUSTAVO CONNOR (also known as “Gus”)

Age: 21

Brooklyn, New York

RASHAAD CRAIG (also known as “Skeeno”)

Age: 25

Brooklyn, New York

QUINTEN DELVALLE (also known as “Q”)

Age: 24

Brooklyn, New York

ELIZABETH DUECASTER

Age: 35

Searsport, Maine

CHRISTINA ESTEVEZ

Age: 31

Queens, New York

ERICA FAGGIOLE

Age: 44

Maine

ANTONIO FULTON (also known as “Tone”)

Age: 23

Brooklyn, New York

FRANKLIN GILLESPIE (also known as “Spazz” and “Frankie Gino”)

Age: 30

Newark, New Jersey

ROMEO GONZALES

Age: 22

Brooklyn, New York

NIA GOVAN (also known as “Cam” and “V”)

Age: 29

Boston, Massachusetts

KEON GRANT (also known as “Keys”)

Age: 34

Brooklyn, New York

MOELEEK HARRELL (also known as “Moe Money”)

Age: 31

Brooklyn, New York

PAUL HARRIS (also known as “Baldhead”)

Age: 31

Brooklyn, New York

NADINE HEATH

Age: 54

Troy, Maine

AMANDA HUARD

Age: 38

Raymond, Maine

LATRELL JOHNSON (also known as “Barlie Buckz”)

Age: 27

Brooklyn, New York

ANTHONY KENNEDY (also known as “Biggie”)

Age: 34

Queens, New York

TYQUAWN LANE (also known as “Bicks” and “Tah Tah”)

Age: 27

Brooklyn, New York

JOANNE LYDEM

Age: 49

Garland, Maine

JESSICA PELKEY

Age: 26

Presque Isle, Maine

CHRISHAWN PENN (also known as “Prince”)

Age: 26

Brooklyn, New York

MICHAEL PEREZ (also known as “White Mike”)

Age: 29

Brooklyn, New York

JOELLE POCHE (also known as “Rico”)

Age: 21

Brooklyn, New York

MICHAEL REID (also known as “Half”)

Age: 39

Brooklyn, New York

ISAIAH TERRY SANDIFORD

Age: 21

Brooklyn, New York

CHINASA STRACHAN

Age: 33

Brooklyn, New York

NICOLETTE TOMPKINS

Age: 22

Westfield, Maine

AMANDA WALTON (also known as “A”)

Age: 32

Portland, Maine

DANIELLE WHITE

Age: 47

Swanville, Maine

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 20-CR-239 (S-3) (BMC)