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Release #242-2006
www.queensda.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2006

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**D.A. BROWN: JURIES RETURN SAME DAY GUILTY VERDICTS
IN FOUR SEPARATE HOMICIDE CASES IN QUEENS**

Verdicts Returned Within Hours Of Each Other; Defendants Each Face Up to 25 Years to Life in Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that jurors deliberating in four separate murder trials being conducted in Queens Supreme Court in Kew Gardens returned unanimous verdicts of guilty within hours of each other yesterday.

District Attorney Brown said, "Yesterday was truly a great day for the People of New York – and especially for the people of Queens County – who can feel secure that these defendants are now behind bars and face lengthy prison terms. I can't remember a day when so many juries have spoken so loudly, so clearly and in unison about their abhorrence for the senseless killing of other human beings."

District Attorney Brown identified the four cases as follows:

1) William Patterson, 24, of 18-36 153rd Street in Jamaica, Queens, who was convicted of second-degree murder, second-degree criminal possession of a weapon and first-degree reckless endangerment. According to trial testimony, the defendant, armed with an illegal revolver, fatally shot James Thomas, 28, once in the back on May 31, 2002, at 4:50 a.m. outside a social club on the corner of 109th Avenue and Sutphin Boulevard in Jamaica. Queens Supreme Court Justice Michael Aloise, who presided at trial, set sentencing for January 8, 2007. The defendant faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

2) Darwin Roque, 27, of 94-21 41st Avenue in Jackson Heights, who was convicted of second-degree murder and fourth-degree criminal possession of a weapon. According to trial testimony, Roque stabbed Wilson Argudo, 17, eight times in the chest and face with a butterfly knife, fatally wounding him. The murder occurred on the evening of December 20, 2003, in the vicinity of Roosevelt Avenue and 90th Street in Jackson Heights. Queens Supreme Court Justice Randall T. Eng, who presided at trial, set sentencing for December 20, 2006, the third anniversary of the victim's death. The defendant faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

3) Sydney Sampson, 57, of 105-20 189th Street in Hollis, Queens, who was convicted of second-degree murder and third-degree criminal possession of a weapon. According to trial testimony, Sampson, who had been involved in an abusive relationship with his wife for several years, became enraged with his mother-in-law, Olga Prince, 70, accusing her of causing him to lose control and making it difficult to dominate his family. On November 10, 2003, Sampson shot Ms. Prince in the face with a .380 caliber handgun – which shattered her jaw and ribs and perforated her jugular vein – before viciously beating her to death with a 9mm handgun. Queens Supreme Court Justice Richard L. Buchter, who presided at trial, set sentencing for December 5, 2006. The defendant faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

4) Jerome Fletcher, 28, of 54 Baiting Place in Farmingdale, Long Island, who was convicted of second-degree murder, first-degree robbery, second-degree criminal possession of a weapon and tampering with physical evidence. According to trial testimony, on the morning of October 7, 2004, Fletcher acted as a getaway driver during a gunpoint payroll robbery of his former boss, Bruce Levy, at the Red Cap Valet in Long Island City. Mr. Levy was killed during the robbery. Queens Supreme Court Justice Robert J. Hanophy set sentencing for December 18, 2006. The defendant faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

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Assistant District Attorney John W. Kosinski of the District Attorney's Homicide Trials Bureau, prosecuted the Patterson case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Brad A. Leventhal, Bureau Chief, and Jack Warsawsky, Deputy Bureau Chief.

Assistant District Attorneys Kenneth M. Appelbaum, Deputy Bureau Chief of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, and Mina Q. Malik prosecuted the Roque case, and Eric Rosenbaum, Chief of the District Attorney's DNA Prosecutions Unit, prosecuted the Sampson case. Both cases were prosecuted under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Marjory D. Fisher, Chief of District Attorney Brown's Special Victims Bureau.

Assistant District Attorney Robin D. Leopold, Deputy Bureau Chief of the District Attorney's Kew Gardens I Bureau prosecuted the Fletcher case.

The Patterson, Roque and Sampson cases were prosecuted under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders. The Fletcher case was prosecuted under the overall supervision of Senior Executive Assistant District Attorney for Trials James C. Quinn and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorneys for Trials John H. Larsen and Robert J. Masters.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted on www.queensda.org