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**D.A. BROWN: QUEENS MAN PLEADS GUILTY
IN GANG MURDER AND ROBBERY OF LEFRAK CITY RESIDENT**

Faces 21 Years To Life In Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced that a 23-year-old Elmhurst resident interrupted his murder trial today to plead guilty to charges that he participated in the gang assault, robbery and shooting death of a Lefrak City resident who was returning home from work in November 2004.

District Attorney Brown said, "The victim was a hard-working immigrant who was returning home late at night to his wife and young son when he was brutally set upon by the defendant and others – an image silently captured by a video surveillance camera operated by the City's Department of Environmental Protection. Although the actual attack took place off-camera, the defendant reappeared on camera minutes later as he fled the scene, leaving the victim slumped over and his body riddled with bullets. The defendant's admission of guilt today to such a cold-blooded and violent crime ensures that he will serve a lengthy prison sentence and protect society at large."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Jordan J. Smith, 23, of 97-20 57th Avenue in Queens. Smith, whose jury trial started on September 19, 2007, pleaded guilty to second-degree murder, first-degree gang assault, first-degree attempted robbery, second- and third-degree criminal possession of a weapon and tampering with physical evidence before Queens Supreme Court Justice Michael D. Aloise, who indicated that he would sentence the defendant to an indeterminate term of 21 years to life in prison at sentencing on November 5, 2007.

The District Attorney said that, in pleading guilty, the defendant admitted that he and others approached 36-year-old Andrey Kovalenko at gunpoint as he walked along Horace Harding Expressway near 97th Avenue at approximately 4:00 a.m. on November 14, 2004, and demanded money of him. The men then shot Kovalenko seven times, striking him in the head, chest, torso and hands before stealing his wallet and fleeing. Kovalenko, who worked as an electrician, was transported to a local Queens hospital where he was pronounced death hours later as a result of gunshot wounds and minor blunt impact injuries to the torso and the extremities.

Jordan is one of three defendants charged with the murder of Kovalenko. The other two – Joshua Ryles, 21, of 55-30 99th Street, and John Richardson, 19, of 97-30 57th Avenue, both of Queens, are scheduled to stand trial later this month in Queens Supreme Court. A fourth individual is presently being sought.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Debra Pomodore, of the District Attorney's Homicide Trial Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Brad A. Leventhal, Bureau Chief, and Jack Warsawsky, Deputy Bureau Chief, and 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.

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