



**RICHARD A. BROWN**  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
QUEENS COUNTY**  
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD  
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568  
718-286-6000

Release # 152-2009  
[www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2009

**CONTACT:** KEVIN RYAN  
HELEN PETERSON  
MERIS CAMPBELL  
(718) 286-6315

**UNLICENSED DRIVER CHARGED WITH HITTING TWO FLAG MEN  
ON QUEENS ROAD PROJECT WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS**  
*One Victim's Leg Amputated; Defendant Faces Up to Seven Years In Prison If Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a 27-year-old Long Island woman has been charged with driving under the influence of crack cocaine and at a high rate of speed through a Springfield Gardens construction zone – marked off with lights and orange and white striped barrels – and striking two flag persons, one critically.

District Attorney Brown said, “The defendant’s alleged actions are an unfortunate example of people getting behind the wheel while their senses are impaired and that all too often recklessly put people’s lives at risk. Such conduct cannot be tolerated. This case will be prosecuted vigorously to ensure that justice is served.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Yolanda Silvera, 27, of 84 Franklin Avenue in Malverne, Long Island. Silvera was arraigned on Saturday, August 15, 2009, before Queens Criminal Court Judge William Harrington on charges of second-degree assault, second-degree vehicular assault (Vasean’s Law), second-degree reckless endangerment and various violations of the vehicle and traffic law – including reckless driving, driving by an unlicensed operator, and operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Silvera, who faces up to seven years in prison if convicted, was ordered held on \$250,000 bail and to return to court on August 28, 2009.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal charges, Silvera, who does not hold a valid driver’s license, was driving a 2002 Nissan at approximately sixty miles an hour and arguing with David Kruger, a passenger in the car, when she approached the intersection of Rockaway Boulevard and 150<sup>th</sup> Street at about 10:40 p.m. on Thursday, August 13, 2009. Although other vehicles were stopped at the light, it is alleged, Silvera failed to slow down and instead veered right into the barrier leading up to the construction zone and struck Michael Hudson and Robert Keller, who were working at the site. The force of the impact sent one of the men flying over the car’s hood.

According to the complaint, when police arrived at the scene, they observed the front end of the Nissan smashed, the windows blown out and blood stains on the trunk and rear passenger door.

The complaint further alleges that at the time of her arrest, Silvera made statements to the police that she had smoked crack cocaine prior to the accident.

Hudson, 33, and Keller, 32, were transported to a local Queens hospital. Hudson, who is in critical

(MORE)

condition, sustained facial trauma and injuries to his lower extremities that required the amputation of his lower left leg. Keller, who also sustained injuries to his lower extremities, required surgery on his left ankle.

Kruger, 38, of 2300 Fowler Street in Bellmore, was charged with seventh-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance (cocaine), a Class A misdemeanor. He was arraigned before Queens Criminal Court Judge James P. Griffin on August 15, 2009. Bail was set at \$500 and he was ordered to return to court on August 20, 2009.

The investigation was conducted by Police Officer Christopher Calderone, who is assigned to the NYPD's 105<sup>th</sup> Precinct.

The case will be prosecuted by the District Attorney's Kew Gardens I Bureau, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Francesco Catarisano, Bureau Chief, and Robin D. Leopold and Raymond E. Scheer, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and 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.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

#

**Note to Editors: E-version of this press release posted at [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org).**