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**CORONA MAN SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS IN PRISON FOR DRIVE-BY SHOOTING  
THAT LEFT 11-YEAR-OLD GIRL DEAD**

*Child Struck By Gunfire As She Played In Fire Hydrant Spray*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Corona man has been sentenced to 25 years in prison for the fatal shooting of an 11-year-old girl as she played in a fire hydrant spray on a warm summer night.

District Attorney Brown said, "An innocent child was killed while simply seeking relief from the sweltering summer heat by running through a fire hydrant spray outside of her home. It is a tragedy that senselessly ended an 11-year-old's life and left her family broken-hearted. Today's sentence is more than justified."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Jeffrey Matista, 20, of 60-15 Calloway Street in Corona, Queens. Matista pleaded guilty to first-degree manslaughter last month and was sentenced today to a determinate sentence of 25 years in prison by Queens Supreme Court Justice Michael Aloise. His cousin, Joewyn Diaz, 18, pleaded guilty to second-degree criminal possession of a weapon in connection with the case last month and faces a determinate sentence of 13 ½ years in prison.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the charges, just before midnight on July 17, 2006, Diaz drove a Honda Accord southbound on 99<sup>th</sup> Street in Corona following a verbal dispute with other teenagers. In the left rear passenger seat sat Matista. As the car approached the vicinity of 55-16 99<sup>th</sup> Street, Matista lowered the car window and fired a handgun numerous times in the direction of individuals standing on the street. One of the bullets struck Genesis Regalado, 11, above her right eye, fatally wounding her. The defendants then fled the scene.

Earlier today, while speaking at the 101<sup>st</sup> Precinct about the recent Queens Gun Buyback Program, District Attorney Brown said, "Nothing can be more important than keeping our neighborhoods as safe places for our children in which to grow up. Far too often we have had tragic situations where precious young lives were taken after being caught in the crossfire of gun battles and far too often we have seen gang and drug related violence resulting in the death of those involved. Our success in taking more than 900 guns off of the streets of Queens as a result of our gun buyback program this past weekend may help to prevent another child from becoming the victim of gun violence."

According to the District Attorney, Diaz was apprehended in Queens and, based upon information provided to the New York City Police Department, Matista was taken into custody by agents of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Immigrations Customs Enforcement in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, after he arrived there on an American Airlines flight from John F. Kennedy International Airport.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Thomas Nellan and Ramon Munoz of the New York City Police Department's 110<sup>th</sup> Precinct Detective Squad under the supervision of Lieutenant Edward Rutter, Commanding Officer, and Sergeant Brian Conlon, of the NYPD's Queens Homicide Task Force, under the supervision of Lieutenant John Perdoch.

Assistant District Attorney John W. Kosinski of the District Attorney's Homicide Trials Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys 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](http://www.queensda.org).**