



RICHARD A. BROWN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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

Release #20-2009
www.queensda.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2009

CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE
(718) 286-6315

TEENAGE COUSINS PLEAD GUILTY IN FATAL DRIVE-BY SHOOTING
OF 11-YEAR-OLD GIRL ON CORONA STREET

Girl Struck By Gunfire As She Played In Fire Hydrant Spray

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that two teenage cousins – one of whom fled New York and was apprehended in the Dominican Republic – have pleaded guilty in connection with the fatal shooting of an 11-year-old girl on a Corona street.

District Attorney Brown said, “In seeking relief from the sweltering heat at an open fire hydrant outside her home, an innocent child was killed when she was struck by a bullet fired from a nearby car. The sentences expected as a result of today’s guilty pleas are lengthy and warranted.”

The District Attorney identified the defendants as Jeffrey Matista, 20, and Joewyn Diaz, 18, both of 60-15 Calloway Street in Corona, Queens. Matista pleaded guilty to first-degree manslaughter and faces a determinate sentence of 25 years in prison. Diaz pleaded guilty to second-degree criminal possession of a weapon and faces a determinate sentence of 13 ½ years in prison. Queens Supreme Court Justice Michael Aloise set sentencing for next month.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the charges, just before midnight on July 17, 2006, Diaz drove a 1994 four-door Honda Accord southbound on 99th 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 99th 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.

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 110th 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 is prosecuting 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.

#

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