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**FORMER NYPD POLICE OFFICER PLEADS GUILTY
TO RAPE IN 1996 ATTACK ON YOUNG WOMAN**

Caught following DNA Cold Hit; Faces Up To 16 Years In Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Woodside man who at one time was a New York City police officer has pleaded guilty to the 1996 rape of a 21-year-old woman in her Howard Beach home. He had been apprehended in February 2006 as a result of a DNA "Cold Hit."

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendant had escaped justice for nearly a decade when a DNA sample he provided in connection with an unrelated prosecution proved his undoing. The sample was positively matched to DNA evidence obtained from his earlier victim's rape kit. The use of DNA is an important law enforcement tool that proves the adage 'You can run but you can't hide.' Hopefully, this conviction will now bring closure to the victim of this horrific crime."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Ronald Murgio Jr., 38, of 35-09 Crescent Street in Woodside, Queens. Murgio, a former police officer assigned to the 67th Precinct in Brooklyn prior to his termination in 1995, now works as a construction worker. He pleaded guilty yesterday to first-degree rape before Acting Queens Supreme Court Justice Barry Kron who indicated that he would sentence the defendant to an indeterminate term of 8-16 years in prison when sentenced on April 2, 2009.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the charges, the defendant broke into the residence of a then-21-year-old Howard Beach resident at approximately 3:00 a.m. on November 6, 1996, through a first-floor back window. The defendant then jumped on the victim's bed and, tying his victim's hands with her own bra, placed a pillow over her head and told her to be quiet before sexually abusing and raping her. The defendant then stole jewelry and removed cash from the victim's wallet before fleeing out the front door.

According to the District Attorney, the victim immediately called 911. She was treated at a local Queens hospital and interviewed by detectives who submitted a rape kit for DNA testing. Under the John Doe Indictment Project – a 2003 citywide initiative that uses DNA profiles of unidentified sex criminals to indict them even before they are apprehended to prevent their escape from prosecution due to the expiration of the statute of limitations – a Queens County Grand Jury indicted the defendant as John Doe in February 2006.

Special Assistant District Attorney Karen Migdal, of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief, and Kenneth M. Appelbaum and Lucinda C. Suarez, Deputy Chiefs, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney Daniel A. Saunders.

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Note to Editors: E-version of press release posted at www.queensda.org