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COMMUNITY PARTNER IN JUSTICE NOTIFICATION

Teenager Convicted of Murder and Arson in Death of New York City Police Officer Dennis Guerra

Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson announced today Marcell Dockery, 18, has been convicted by a jury of felony murder, assault and arson for deliberately setting fire to a mattress in the hallway of a New York City Housing Authority building in Coney Island, which led to the death of a New York City Police Officer and grave injuries to his partner.

On April 6, 2014, Officers Guerra and Rodriguez responded to a 911 call of a fire at the apartment building on Surf Avenue in Coney Island. When the officers arrived to the 13th floor, the source of the fire, they were overcome by toxic smoke. Responding firefighters found both officers unconscious and rescued them from the building. Officer Guerra died of his injuries three days later, and Officer Rodriguez was in a coma for several weeks.

The defendant admitted to setting the deadly fire and told investigators, "I decided to take a lighter and light the top of the mattress because I was bored."

District Attorney Thompson said, "Police Officers Guerra and Rodriguez showed great courage when they rushed into that building to save the lives of others. Tragically, Officer Guerra lost his life and his partner suffered severe and permanent life-threatening injuries – all because the defendant was bored and set a mattress on fire, and did so despite being clearly warned about the dangers of setting fires. May this verdict bring some comfort to Officer Guerra's family, as well as to Officer Rodriguez and her loved ones and to the brave men and women of the NYPD."