

HUDSON  COUNTY  
PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: Thursday, June 1, 2017

**INDICTMENT RETURNED IN UNION CITY FATAL FIRE**

Hudson County Prosecutor Esther Suarez has released the following information:

On May 24, 2017, a Hudson County Grand Jury returned an Indictment against Eddie Gonzalez Sr., age 27, from Union City, and Edwin Diaz, age 21, of Union City, for recklessly causing the death of Eddie Gonzalez Jr. while causing a fire at 1404 Summit Avenue in Union City on March 4, 2017.

The Grand Jury Indictment charged each of them with Manslaughter in violation of N.J.S. 2C:11-4, a second-degree crime; Causing Widespread Injury or Damage in violation of N.J.S. 2C:17-2, a third-degree crime; and Creating a Risk of Widespread Injury or Damage in violation of N.J.S. 2C:17-2, a fourth-degree crime.

On May 31, 2017, a warrant was issued for the arrest of Gonzalez Sr. and Diaz. On June 1, 2017, they surrendered themselves to Hudson County Sheriff's Officers at the Hudson County Administration Building in Jersey City.

Gonzalez Sr. and Diaz are currently being held at the Hudson County Correctional Facility pending a detention hearing. They are scheduled to be arraigned on the Indictment in Superior Court on June 12, 2017.

On Saturday, March 4, 2017, at approximately 1 a.m., the Union City Police Department received a 911 call reporting a fire on Summit Avenue in Union City. Police Officers responding

to the fire found that it had fully engulfed the building and that all occupants of 1404 Summit Avenue were accounted for except one-year-old Eddie Gonzalez Jr.

Eddie Gonzalez Jr. lived at 1404 Summit Avenue with his parents, Eddie Gonzalez Sr. and Aaliyah Mercado, and a five-month-old sibling. Gonzalez Sr. was injured in the fire. Mercado and the five-month-old sibling escaped the fire unharmed.

The investigation into the origin and cause of the Union City fire that resulted in the death of Eddie Gonzalez Jr. revealed that the origin of the fire was the rear room in Apt. 2L, 1404 Summit Avenue and the cause of the fire was incendiary.

The investigation was conducted jointly by the Union City Police Department, the Office of the Hudson County Prosecutor, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the NJ State Fire Marshal.

The above charges are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty. R.P.C.3.6(b)(6).