



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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DOI ARRESTS CITY RECREATION WORKER CHARGED WITH ENDANGERING THE WELFARE OF A CHILD

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced today the arrest of EDWIN LEWIS, an employee of the City Department of Parks and Recreation ("DPR"), on charges of harassing and endangering the welfare of a 15-year-old girl at a City recreation center in Brooklyn in March and April 2008. DOI arrested LEWIS late Thursday on criminal charges filed by the office of Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes. DOI's investigation began after DPR supervisors forwarded to DOI allegations of LEWIS's inappropriate conduct.

LEWIS, 50, of Glendale, N.Y., is charged with two counts of Endangering the Welfare of a Child, a class A misdemeanor, one count of Attempted Sexual Abuse in the Third Degree, a class B misdemeanor, and two counts of Harassment in the Second Degree, a violation. If convicted of the most serious charge, he faces up to a year's imprisonment.

LEWIS, a Recreation Specialist, has been employed by DPR for approximately eight years and receives an annual salary of \$35,378. Until April 2008, he was assigned as the sports coordinator at the St. John's Recreation Center, 1251 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, where he oversaw youth programs. That month, DPR supervisors informed DOI of their concerns regarding LEWIS's conduct at the Center and immediately reassigned him to duties not involving contact with minors. DOI's investigation, which included interviews with a number of individuals, resulted in LEWIS's arrest on a criminal complaint charging that between March and April 2008, at the Recreation Center, LEWIS harassed a 15-year-old patron of the Center, by, among other things, following her, approaching her when she was alone, and, on one occasion, attempting to kiss the teenager on her mouth.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "The City's recreation centers should be safe places for young people to enjoy activities guided by adults acting in their best interests. Instead, this recreation worker is charged with conduct that was harmful to a child and fundamentally violated his responsibility as a City employee. Fortunately, DPR promptly removed him from contact with minors and notified DOI. DOI will thoroughly investigate allegations of misconduct by a City employee toward a child and work with our partners in law enforcement and City government to ensure that swift and firm action is taken where appropriate."

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked the DPR Commissioner Adrian Benepe and his staff for their assistance with the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Office of the Inspector General for DPR. The case is being prosecuted by the office of Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes and is assigned to Assistant District Attorney Connie Solemeo, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Louise Cohen.

Criminal complaints are merely accusations. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Get the worms out of the Big Apple. To report someone ripping off the city, call DOI at (212) 825-5959.