



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation

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### **DOI-BRONX DISTRICT ATTORNEY INVESTIGATION LEADS TO ARREST OF CITY CORRECTION OFFICER ON CHARGES OF CONTRABAND SMUGGLING**

MARK G. PETERS, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), in partnership with DARCEL D. CLARK, Bronx County District Attorney, announced the arrest of a City Correction Officer on charges of trafficking contraband – specifically synthetic marijuana, commonly referred to as "K2" – into the Anna M. Kross Center ("AMKC") on Rikers Island. DOI positioned its drug-sniffing dog, Gunner, at AMKC's front gate and with assistance from the City Department of Correction ("DOC") conducted heightened screening during the 3 p.m. shift change. Gunner alerted on the Correction Officer MOHAMMED SUFIAN who was searched and was found carrying 61.6 grams of synthetic marijuana wrapped in black electrical tape and concealed in his socks. A search of SUFIAN's home also recovered five packages wrapped similarly in electrical tape – four packages of synthetic marijuana weighing a total of 126 grams and one package of tobacco weighing 32 grams – which the investigation revealed was destined for AMKC. Since 2014, DOI has arrested 25 Correction Officers and other DOC staff on a variety of charges, including contraband smuggling charges.

DOI Commissioner Mark G. Peters said, "This arrest demonstrates DOI's continued focus to stem the flow of contraband smuggling within the City's jails, a significant factor that feeds the violence and disorder on Rikers. DOI and the Bronx District Attorney, in partnership, are using new and innovative approaches to unravel the criminal networks that threaten our City's correction system."

Bronx County District Attorney Darcel D. Clark said, "Smuggling contraband into Rikers Island jeopardizes inmates, staff and honest correction officers who wear their uniforms with pride, and who undertake dangerous, difficult work every single day. To address the problem of contraband entering these facilities, among other systemic issues at Rikers, I am working with all the stakeholders to establish an office at the Island to demonstrate to everyone that justice will be dispensed swiftly and surely."

SUFIAN, 25, of Brooklyn, N.Y., was arrested late yesterday and charged with Bribe Receiving in the Third Degree and Promoting Dangerous Prison Contraband in the First Degree, both class D felonies; and Promoting Prison Contraband in the Second Degree, a class A misdemeanor. Upon conviction, a class D felony is punishable by up to seven years in prison and a class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to a year's incarceration.

According to the criminal complaint, SUFIAN was paid \$500 the night before his arrest and was supposed to get the remainder of the money after he made the delivery of the contraband.

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SUFIAN has been employed by DOC since October 2014 and as a probationary Correction Officer he receives an annual base salary of approximately \$39,755. As a result of this arrest he has been suspended.

Photos from the investigation follow the release.

As a result of DOI's contraband investigations, DOI recommended DOC use drug-sniffing dogs at entrances to stem the flow of drugs into its facilities. DOC adopted this recommendation and is integrating these law enforcement canines at the entrances. As part of that effort, DOI employed its own canine unit consisting of Gunner and his handler, Assistant Inspector General Carmelo Galarza. Gunner is a two-and-a-half year-old male, chocolate Labrador Retriever state certified in November 2015 to detect drugs. He has been working as a DOI drug detection canine on Rikers Island and on other DOI investigations since that time. Gunner and Galarza underwent nine weeks of training at Rikers Island as part of the state certification process.

DOI Commissioner Peters thanked DOC Commissioner Joseph Ponte and Bronx County District Attorney Darcel D. Clark, and their staffs, for their cooperation and assistance in this investigation.

DOI's Office of the Inspector General for DOC investigated this case, under the supervision of First Deputy Inspector General Chin Ho Cheng, Senior Inspector General Jennifer Sculco, Associate Commissioner Paul Cronin, Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Michael Carroll and First Deputy Commissioner Lesley Brovner.

Bronx County Assistant District Attorney Ann Lee is prosecuting the case, from the Bronx District Attorney's Office, under the supervision of Lawrence Piergrossi, Deputy Chief James Goward, and Chief Stuart Levy.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.



Synthetic marijuana concealed on the ankle of SUFIAN and found during a search at the Anna M. Kross Center on Rikers Island as SUFIAN tried to enter the facility to start his shift.



Synthetic marijuana found on SUFIAN – 61.6 grams – recovered during the search, as SUFIAN entered the Anna M. Kross Center to start his shift.



The five wrapped packages – four containing synthetic marijuana and one containing loose tobacco – recovered after a search of SUFIAN's home.

*DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country and New York City's corruption watchdog. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City. DOI's strategy attacks corruption comprehensively through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs.*

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