

**COUNTY OF SUFFOLK
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**



**THOMAS J. SPOTA
DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

March 9, 2012

Arraignments for five arrested for robbery spree in western Suffolk

Five armed robbery suspects believed responsible for a series of violent holdups pleaded not guilty this morning at their arraignment in Suffolk County court.

The grand jury indictment charged Edwin Acosta-Martinez, 23, of 15 Ludlum St., Huntington Station, with seven counts of Robbery 1st Degree, Carlos Velasquez, 17, of 135 W. Bay Shore Rd., Bay Shore, eight counts of Robbery 1st Degree and three counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon second degree, Wilmer Velasquez-Cruz, 27, of 110 McKinley St., Brentwood with six counts Robbery 1st Degree, Mario Chincilla Rodriguez, 23, of 170 East 23rd St., Huntington Station with three counts of Robbery 1st Degree and Jonathan Portillo, 16, of 246 Lincoln Ave., Brentwood, charged with three counts of Robbery 1st Degree.

District Attorney Thomas Spota said the robberies were solved in large part by the sharing of criminal intelligence gathered by detectives in the first, second and third precincts where the robberies occurred between December 27 to February 28. Loaded semi-automatic handguns were wielded at each robbery and, except for the pharmacy robbery; victims were beaten during the thefts.

"It was critical to find the perpetrators of these increasingly violent robberies and the police did so by detecting the pattern of holdups and the similarities in the methods used by these five defendants," DA Spota said.

The five were taken into custody by Third Squad detectives on February 29 shortly after the robbery of the Health Mart Pharmacy, 5 Candlewood Road in Bay Shore where they tied up five women (four store employees and one customer) using plastic zip ties. Edwin Acosta-Martinez, Carlos Velasquez, Wilmer Velasquez-Cruz, and Mario Chincilla Rodriguez took the women's cash, cellphones and jewelry and approximately \$100 from the store's cash register.

Rodriguez was ordered held without bail, Carlos Velasquez is being held in lieu of \$750,000 cash bail, and the three remaining defendants; Portillo, Martinez and Cruz are incarcerated in the county jail in lieu of \$500,000 cash bail.



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Defendants are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.