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**BRONX MAN CONVICTED OF MURDER FOR SHOOTING NEAR QUEENS COURTHOUSE
ON NEW YEAR'S DAY IN 2021**

*Defendant Shot Multiple People Outside Former Umbrella Hotel, Killing 20-Year-Old
Faces up to 75 Years in Prison at Sentencing*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Richard Swygert was convicted of murder and other crimes for a deadly shooting incident outside the former Umbrella Hotel in Kew Gardens in 2021. Swygert shot and killed a 20-year-old Rosedale man and shot and injured two others in a dispute that erupted between factions of young people outside the hotel.

District Attorney Katz said: “Richard Swygert turned a quiet Kew Gardens street into a shooting gallery in the early morning hours of New Year’s Day 2021. He killed Robert Williams, shot another man six times and wounded a third, before running out of bullets and fleeing the scene. It was the first homicide of the year, and the defendant showed a complete disregard for human life. Thanks to the extraordinary work of our prosecutors and partners at the NYPD, this defendant was convicted at trial of murder and related charges. We offer our condolences to the victims and their loved ones.”

Swygert, 24, of the Bronx, was found guilty by jury today of murder in the second degree, two counts of attempted murder in the second degree, assault in the first and second degrees, and two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree.

Trial openings began on March 2 and closings took place March 16. The jury deliberated for approximately two days before reaching a verdict.

Queens Supreme Court Justice Ushir Pandit-Durant set the defendant’s return date for April 24, when he faces a sentence of up to 75 years to life in prison.

According to the charges and trial testimony, on January 1, 2021, at approximately 1:09 a.m., Swygert and others entered the Umbrella Hotel on 82nd Avenue and Queens Boulevard in Kew Gardens where they waited for the elevator. A few minutes later, the three victims exited the elevator and Swygert and his group followed them to the main hotel lobby.

Both groups left the hotel and words were exchanged between one of the victims and one of Swygert’s companions. A physical fight ensued between the two groups.

Swygert took out a gun and fired multiple rounds. The defendant shot 20-year-old Robert Deandre Williams five times. He then fired at the second victim six times, striking him in the stomach, arms and legs. Swygert shot the third victim once in the leg.

Williams was taken to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead as the result of multiple gunshot wounds.

The two surviving victims were taken to local hospitals for medical treatment. One man required life-saving emergency surgery as well as additional surgeries to save his leg from amputation. The second man was treated for a gunshot wound to the thigh.

Thirteen spent shell casings were recovered from the front of the Umbrella Hotel, which permanently closed for business a short time after the incident.

Swygert was arrested by members of the NYPD on October 26, 2021.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Kanella Georgopoulos of the District Attorney’s Homicide Bureau is prosecuting the case, with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Veronika Podoprighora under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys John Kosinski, Bureau Chief, and Karen Ross and Jonathan Selkove, Deputy Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

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