



## OFFICE OF THE MERCER COUNTY PROSECUTOR

**ANGELO J. ONOFRI**  
*Prosecutor*

209 S. Broad Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
P.O. Box 8068  
Trenton, New Jersey 08650-0068  
Phone: (609) 989-6350  
mercercountyprosecutor.com

**STEPHANIE A. KATZ**  
*First Assistant Prosecutor*

**JESSICA PLUMERI**  
*Chief of County Detectives*

**TAREK A. ELKACHOUTY**  
*Deputy Chief of County Detectives*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT:** Casey A. DeBlasio  
cdeblasio@mercercounty.org

### **Two Individuals Arrested for the Murders of Gustavo and Johnny Perez**

Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri announced today that the Mercer County Homicide Task Force has charged a man and a woman in this week's murders of Gustavo and Johnny Perez on Mulberry Street in Trenton.

Dajuan Kelley AKA "Bando," 26, of Ewing, and Destanie Ellis, 29, of Morrisville, Pennsylvania, are each charged with two counts of first-degree murder, one count of second-degree possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, one count of second-degree unlawful possession of a weapon and one count of first-degree conspiracy. Ellis was arrested Thursday night in Trenton. Kelley was arrested today in Hampton, Georgia, by the U.S. Marshals Regional Fugitive Task Force. The prosecutor's office is filing motions to detain both defendants.

The charges are the result of an investigation by the Mercer County Homicide Task Force. Ellis conspired with Kelley, who ultimately shot and killed Gustavo and Johnny Perez, who were standing in front of a second floor kitchen window of their residence on Mulberry Street.

The shooting occurred around 10:30 p.m. on October 20, 2020. Kelley shot into the second floor of the Perez residence in the 200 block of Mulberry Street. Upon arrival, police located Gustavo, 16, and his brother Johnny, 8, in the kitchen suffering from gunshot wounds. The victims were taken to Capital Health Regional Medical Center where they were pronounced dead a short time later.

Officers located eight spent shell casings on the opposite side of Breunig Avenue, approximately 50 feet from Mulberry Street. HTF detectives reviewed numerous surveillance videos from the

area of the homicide and identified two vehicles of interest and two persons of interest. A blue Chevrolet Malibu was observed making a left turn onto Enterprise Avenue, turn around toward Mulberry Street, and park in a no parking zone with its headlights off as Gustavo Perez and his older brother walked toward Breunig Avenue. Moments later, a black Ford Expedition was observed driving at a slow speed following the brothers on Mulberry Street. The driver of the Ford Expedition was observed to be a black male.

The investigation revealed that Destanie Ellis was the driver of the blue Chevrolet Malibu following Gustavo and his older brother, and Dajuan Kelley was identified as the shooter. Prior to the shooting, Ellis and Kelley were sitting in the Ford Expedition on New York Avenue when the brothers walked past her vehicle and attempted to gain entry. A verbal dispute ensued between the brothers and Kelley and Ellis.

Ellis left the area in her blue Chevrolet Malibu and called other individuals to her location as she followed Gustavo and his older brother to their residence. Ellis, Kelley and other individuals arrived on Mulberry Street in separate vehicles, and Ellis pointed out the house where Gustavo and his older brother entered. Then Kelley began shooting at the males who were in standing in front of the window.

Prosecutor Onofri thanked the all of the members of the Mercer County Homicide Task Force, comprised of assistant prosecutors, detectives, officers and agents with the prosecutor's office, the Trenton police, the Mercer County Sheriff's Office and the New Jersey State Police.

"Law enforcement is always working tirelessly to protect the public and solve crimes, but the work accomplished by the Mercer County Homicide Task Force over the last few weeks has been nothing short of extraordinary," Prosecutor Onofri said. "To be actively investigating multiple cases, tracking down witnesses and leads, reviewing hours and hours of surveillance footage, obtaining and executing search warrants, all the while responding to new crime scenes as they develop, and be able to make several arrests in multiple cases is an example of unrelenting fortitude and dedication to public safety. I could not be more proud and I can only hope that the community continues to recognize their effort, and remain vigilant and involved."

Prosecutor Onofri also expressed his gratitude to Mercer County Sheriff Jack Kemler, the Trenton Police Department, the New Jersey State Police and the U.S. Marshals Service for their continued support, shared resources and manpower.

The shooting remains under investigation. Anyone with information is asked to call the Homicide Task Force at (609) 989-6406. Information can also be emailed to [mchftips@mercercounty.org](mailto:mchftips@mercercounty.org).

Despite having been charged, every defendant is presumed innocent until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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