

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Justice in Every Borough.

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Contact:

Redmond Haskins
The Legal Aid Society
929-441-2384
rhaskins@legal-aid.org

*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Legal Aid Secures Dismissal for Client, Sircarlyle Arnold, who was Arrested by NYPD and Placed in a Knee-on-Neck Hold

Defenders Demand Accountability for all NYPD Officers Involved

(QUEENS, NY) – **Olayemi Olurin, Staff Attorney with the Queens Trial Office at The Legal Aid Society**, released the following statement in response to securing a dismissal of charges pending against Sircarlyle Arnold, a Legal Aid client who was violently arrested this past January by New York City Police Department (NYPD) officers and placed in a knee-on-neck hold, the same technique used in the killing of George Floyd:

“The charges against Sircarlyle Arnold should have been dismissed weeks ago, just as quickly as they were brought. Mr. Arnold is still reeling from this violent arrest, during which an officer placed him in a knee-on-neck hold, the same technique used in the killing of George Floyd. We demand that the NYPD take swift action to ensure that all officers involved in this incident are held accountable and to send a strong signal to the NYPD that violent acts such as this, all too frequently employed against men of color, will not be tolerated.”

Background

As the world watches the prosecution of a Minnesota officer whose similar actions took the life of George Floyd, DA Melinda Katz announced last Friday that her office would not seek charges against the officers involved, despite the City Council’s passage of a bill reaffirming that knee-on-neck holds are unlawful. The NYPD has provided no information about whether any of the officers involved will face disciplinary consequences, leaving open the possibility that NYPD officers will once again be granted impunity for their violent acts.

In a graphic video, NYPD officers are seen kneeling on Mr. Arnold’s neck while bystanders beg the officers to stop. Also, not a single officer is seen with a mask or practicing safe social distancing.

[Video: Olayemi Olurin on Twitter: "TW: This video shows NYPD officers kneeling on my client, Sircarlyle Arnold's, neck in Queens, NY, while bystanders beg them to stop. This is eerily similar to what was done to George Floyd in May 2020... https://t.co/SLYza3GxiW"](https://t.co/SLYza3GxiW)

The top charge against Mr. Arnold in this case was Reckless Endangerment in the Second Degree – a misdemeanor – for allegedly operating an ATV.

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For 145 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. www.legalaidnyc.org