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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

### MTA Police Arrest Youth in Case of Anti-Semitic Graffiti Incidents at Long Island Rail Road's Cedarhurst Station

#### *Tips Lead Detectives to Yeshiva Student Who Confesses to Crime*

MTA Police Chief Michael Coan and Acting Nassau County Police Commissioner Thomas Krumpert today announced the arrest of a Queens teenager on charges that he was responsible for scrawling anti-Semitic graffiti at the Long Island Rail Road station in Cedarhurst on at least eight occasions.

The youth, identified by police as Jonathan Schuster, 18, of Far Rockaway, was charged with eight counts of felony criminal mischief in the third degree as a hate crime, eight counts of criminal mischief in the fourth degree and eight counts making graffiti, both Class A misdemeanors.

The police said that Schuster, a senior at Priority-1:Torah Academy of Lawrence-Cedarhurst, a yeshiva located in Cedarhurst, used a black marker to post anti-Semitic statements that usually included expletives on eight occasions dating to December 2012. The graffiti always defaced advertising billboards on platform level of the station, police said.

Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano said, "I'm proud of the successful joint efforts between the Nassau County Police Department and MTA to apprehend the person responsible for the many anti-Semitic crimes that occurred in the Five Towns."

MTA Police Chief Michael Coan said: "The MTA Police Detective Division led by Inspector Joseph Martelli was in constant contact with the Nassau County Police Department Detective Division and Community Affairs/Biased Crime Units. The effort was greatly enhanced by the assistance of Nassau County Crime Stoppers and we are grateful for the support of our law enforcement partners in solving this crime. We also want to thank Long Island Rail Road President Helena Williams and the many LIRR employees who were our eyes and ears throughout the probe."

The bias case, which had attracted wide attention in the Five Towns area of Nassau County, follows a year-long investigation by the MTA Police Department and the Nassau County Police Department that included uniformed patrols, including surveillance by undercover detectives and the assistance of Nassau County Crime Stoppers.

Crime Stoppers issued a wanted poster last month that offered a reward for information leading to the arrest of whoever was responsible. The posters were distributed at local train stations by members of the Nassau County Police Explorers, a volunteer youth group whose members are preparing for careers in law enforcement.

Since December 2012, investigators had identified 11 incidents in which anti-Semitic graffiti was scrawled on advertisements at three Long Island Rail Road stations in the Five Towns area, including the eight at Cedarhurst Station, three at Lawrence Station and one at Hewlett Station. The MTA Police said their investigation into the other incidents is continuing.