

School Shooting Suspect Arrested

Newark — A suspect wanted for the shooting of two female victims outside of the Essex County College gymnasium on the evening of December 27, 2012 waived extradition today in an Atlanta courtroom, following his arrest in that Georgia city on Friday morning.

Sheriff Armando Fontoura stated that a task force comprised of federal, sheriff's, Newark police and Essex County College police officers developed leads that tracked the movements of Antwan Belfield, age 20, of Newark. "Our task force officers pounded the pavement and knocked on many doors in their effort to identify the gunman," Sheriff Fontoura pointed out. "After weeks of painstaking police work, we located him and we were on his trail. Belfield tried to stay one step ahead of us but our officers were relentless. This investigation was culminated with Belfield's arrest in Atlanta on Friday."

It is alleged that Belfield missed his intended target on the night of the shooting. "He fired his gun indiscriminately," Fontoura noted. "As is usually the case in these types of events innocent bystanders were seriously injured."

The shooting occurred as a crowd was exiting a basketball game at the gym on December 27th. One female victim sustained a gunshot wound to her right calf, causing knee and nerve damage and a broken femur. The other female victim was shot in the back. She suffered a collapsed lung, several broken ribs and nerve damage.

Information as to Belfield's whereabouts was forwarded to FBI agents in Atlanta, Georgia, who made the arrest Friday at 10:00 a.m. without incident. Belfield had been living in an apartment rented by a family member.

Sheriff Fontoura said that Belfield has been charged with two counts each of attempted murder, aggravated assault, the unlawful possession of a weapon, possession of a weapon for unlawful purposes and possession of a weapon by a convicted felon.

Belfield is scheduled to return to Essex County to face these charges on February 8th. Until then, he is being held at the Fulton County jail without bail.