



# Staten Island Advance

## *Joseph Codd of Annadale was indicated in attack on Midland Beach youth in May 2003*

By FRANK DONNELLY  
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It has been a difficult two years for the Codd family of Annadale.

In June 2003, Joseph Codd, now 17, was indicated along with three other boys in connection with the vicious beating of a Midland Beach teenage at the Annadale station of the Staten Island Railway.

The victim, Salvatore Monforte III, 17, continues to suffer from short-term memory loss as a result of the May 11 2003 attack.

After his arrest, Codd was placed under a court-ordered curfew and had to be home each night by 8 o'clock, said his lawyer, **Joseph R. Benfante**.

His mother, JoAnn, an assistant principal at New Dorp High School was threatened, **Benfante** said. The side of her car has been keyed and dented with a ball peen hammer.

The ordeal finally ended yesterday.

Prosecutors dropped all charges against Codd, based on the statements of co-defendants and witnesses who said he was no present during the attack.

In addition, the victim, who has a limited recollection of the incident, does not recall seeing Codd that night, prosecutors said.

A short burst of applause erupted in Justice Stephen Rooney's Supreme Court, St. George as the judge dismissed the charges against Codd.

Mrs. Codd wept and later hugged Deirdre DeAngelis-D'alessio, New Dorp High School's principal, who was there to lend support.

"I'm at loss for words," Mrs. Codd said outside doors, her eyes still moist. "First and foremost, I want to thank God. I also want to thank **Joe [Benfante]** and his assistants and all our friends and family.

"The system prevailed," said Kevin Codd, her husband and Codd's father.

The younger Codd beamed.

"This is truly a great deal for Joseph Codd," said **Benfante**.

The lawyer said his client's family was grateful to everyone who was involved in the dismissal, including two of the co-defendants, James Doherty and Jonathan Gardell, who said Codd was not at the scene.

Sal Monforte, the victim's father, said he deferred to the district attorney's decision to drop the charges against Codd.

"Assistant District Attorney Scott Schwartz has been doing this case for almost two years," said Monforte, who was not present at yesterday's proceeding but thanked the prosecutor for his work. "Me and my family do not want to see someone put in jail if they're innocent."

Authorities alleged that Joseph Codd, Doherty and Gardell were among a gang of at least eight youths who pounced on Monforte and two friends about 1 a.m, as the three were about to enter the Annadale station.

A source said one of Monforte's friends and some other boys had fought with one of the suspects, David Roldan, 19, of Huguenot, and some other youths on May 10 at the New Dorp train station.

Monforte was knocked unconscious by a thrown bottle and stomped on, prosecutors said. His friends also were kicked and suffered minor injuries.

Monforte was hurt so badly that doctors at Staten Island University Hospital, Ocean Breeze, induced a coma to relieve brain swelling. He was brought out of the coma three weeks later.

Codd, Roldan, Doherty, 17, of Eltingville, and Gardell, 18, of Arden Heights, were the only suspects craged in the attack.

Last week, Doherty said Gardell pleaded guilty to felony assault charges and face sentences ranging from probation to as much as several years in prison.

Roldan, previously cut a plea deal to an assault charge, sources said, and also awaits sentencing.

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