

Ex-WDC resident withdraws plea in center slaying

Eugene Allen, a former resident of Willowbrook Developmental Center, was allowed yesterday to withdraw his guilty plea to a first degree manslaughter charge in the bludgeon-slaying of Raul Cordero, a center resident.

Supreme Court Justice Theodore G. Barlow ordered an innocent plea reinstated on Allen's behalf and put the case over to Sept. 12 since Allen technically now faces a trial.

The judge observed that he has "very grave doubts that the defendant knows what's going on."

Barlow made the observation after Allen's attorney, Jerome V. Giovinazzo, requested permission for Allen to withdraw his guilty plea. Allen was scheduled to be sentenced yesterday.

Giovinazzo said Allen, 25, of 444 Jersey St., New Brighton, appeared to be in "total ignorance" as to the criminal proceedings that have transpired and now claims that someone else was responsible for Cordero's death.

Allen was a Willowbrook resident from 1963 to 1969 following his arrest in January 1976 he was described by center officials as borderline retarded. The officials said Allen should never have been committed to the center.

Allen is charged with second degree murder in the death of Cordero, 30, whose body was found New Year's Day in a yard near Allen's home. Cordero had been institutionalized for 13 years, but was due to have been released shortly after his death.