



BCPO News

Scott A. Coffina, Prosecutor



Philip S. Aronow
First Assistant Prosecutor

Darren N. Anderson
Chief of Detectives

Joel Bewley
BCPO Public Information Officer
Desk: 609-265-5777 Cell: 609-820-4407
jbewley@co.burlington.nj.us

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Union City Man Pleads Guilty to Mansfield Vehicular Homicide *Admits to driving while impaired by marijuana*

Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina announced that a 21-year-old Union City man has pleaded guilty to causing the death of a friend while driving impaired and crashing his vehicle in late 2019 on the New Jersey Turnpike in Mansfield Township.

Under an agreement with the Prosecutor's Office, Johnalex Grullon pled guilty to Vehicular Homicide (Second Degree) and Assault by Auto (Third Degree) in exchange for a five-year term in New Jersey state prison. The plea was entered on Wednesday in Superior Court in Mount Holly before the Hon. Gerard H. Breland, J.S.C., who scheduled sentencing for February 24, 2021.

Grullon acknowledged during the proceeding that he had been smoking marijuana prior to the crash, as well as driving in a reckless manner. He did not refute the findings of toxicology tests that indicated, at the time of the crash, he had marijuana in his system at a level unfit to safely operate a motor vehicle.

The investigation revealed that Grullon had two passengers in his Honda Accord on the afternoon of October 19, 2019, when his vehicle veered off the roadway, struck the guardrail along the shoulder and spun across all lanes before hitting the concrete median barrier and re-entering traffic, colliding with another car.

Grullon and the other occupants were not wearing seatbelts and were ejected from the vehicle. Mohamedam Elbezaz, 21, the rear-seat passenger, was pronounced dead at the scene. The investigation revealed that Grullon and his friends were returning from a trip to South Philadelphia, where they had traveled to order cheesesteaks.

Under the plea agreement, Grullon must help pay for his friend's funeral expenses. The investigation was conducted by the New Jersey State Police.

Grullon is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecutor Joshua Dennis, supervisor of the BCPO Collision Analysis and Reconstruction Unit.

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