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BASKETBALL COACH CONVICTED AT TRIAL OF ASSAULT
IN ONE-PUNCH DEATH OF MAN VISITING QUEENS FOR WEDDING IN 2018

Defendant Faces Up to a Year in Jail at Sentencing

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz today announced that a 37-year-old basketball coach from North Carolina has been found guilty of a misdemeanor assault at trial for punching a man, who later died. The defendant and the victim encountered each other in Long Island City early in the morning in August of 2018.

District Attorney Katz said, “The defendant in this case was in his car parking near his hotel when the victim appeared near the defendant’s vehicle, banged on the back and the rear window may have shattered. The defendant could have driven away from the scene or call 911. Instead, he retaliated by getting out of his car and punching the victim. This was a death that could have been avoided, sparing the victim’s family the loss of a loved one.”

The District Attorney’s Office identified the defendant as Jamill Jones, 37, of North Carolina. Following a week-long jury trial, the defendant was found guilty of assault in the third degree. Queens Criminal Court Judge Joanne Watters, who presided at trial, set sentencing for March 18, 2020, at which time Jones faces up to 1 year in jail.

According to trial testimony, said DA Katz, it was shortly after 1:40 a.m. on August 5, 2018, when the defendant was driving with his companion toward their hotel in Long Island City, Queens. The victim Sandor Szabo earlier that day had attended a family wedding. The 35-year-old victim, who was also staying in a nearby hotel, appeared to have possibly shattered the rear window of the SUV the defendant was driving. Mr. Szabo retreated from the SUV and the defendant followed, punched him once in the face and walked back to his vehicle and left the area.

Continuing, according to trial testimony, said DA Katz, Mr. Szabo was taken to a nearby hospital. His injuries included a laceration to his chin, a skull fracture and other traumatic brain injuries. Two days later, on August 7, 2018, the victim died as a result of those injuries.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Kirk A. Sendlein of the District Attorney’s Homicide Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Brad A. Leventhal, Bureau Chief, Peter J. McCormack III, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, John W. Kosinski, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

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