



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

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CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org

**BROOKLYN MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO AGGRAVATED VEHICULAR HOMICIDE
FOR A 2018 CRASH THAT KILLED A MAN AND TWO DOGS**

*Fatal Collision Also Injured Four Others and Caused Seven-Car Pile Up;
Defendant Was Over the Legal Limit for Alcohol and Also Smoked Marijuana Before Driving;
At Sentencing Defendant Faces 5 to 15 Years in Prison*

Queens District Melinda Katz today announced that a Brooklyn man has pleaded guilty to aggravated vehicular homicide, assault and other crimes for getting behind the wheel of a car and driving after consuming alcohol and smoking marijuana. The August 2018 crash killed a 38-year-old man, his dogs and injured four people.

District Attorney Katz said, “It is extremely selfish to drink and drive – as well as to smoke marijuana and drive. When someone downs a beer or shot or cocktail or smokes a joint and then gets behind the wheel of a car, it endangers the lives of everyone on the road. This defendant has now admitted his guilt and will be sentenced accordingly.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Alex Elicier, 31, of Hart Street in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn. Late yesterday, the defendant pleaded guilty to aggravated vehicular homicide, assault in the second degree and two counts of overdriving, torturing or injuring an animal. Queens Supreme Court Justice Michael Aloise, who accepted the defendant’s plea, set sentencing for September 1, 2020. At that time Elicier faces a term of 5 to 15 years in prison.

District Attorney Katz said, just before 5 a.m. on August 18, 2018, the defendant was driving on the Van Wyck Expressway near Jewel Avenue. Behind the wheel of a Chevy, Elicier was weaving in and out of traffic and crossing multiple lanes. Speeding in excess of 80 mph, the defendant slammed into the back of an Acura being driven by Jasmine Rodriguez. Inside the car with the 27-year-old woman was her friend Jairo Castano and his two pets.

According to the charges, the force of the crash pushed the Acura into the center guardrail and then it went airborne and landed on the southbound lanes of the Van Wyck Expressway upside down. Then a motorist going south on the expressway struck the vehicle. Mr. Castano, 38, was crushed on impact and pronounced dead at the scene. The two dogs were ejected from the vehicle and died. Ms. Rodriguez survived the collision but sustained facial fractures, injuries to her torso and a broken arm.

The DA added that, in all seven vehicles were either hit by debris or crashed while trying to avoid

being hit, including a TSA K-9 Unit heading to Kennedy International Airport. A total of five people, including the defendant were injured in the crash.

DA Katz said the defendant was treated at an area hospital for head injuries. At that time, a search warrant was executed for the defendant's blood. Forty minutes after the crash, Elicier's blood alcohol level was .16. He also tested positive for the presence of THC in his blood stream. Surveillance video showed the defendant at a strip club earlier in the evening, drinking Hennessy and smoking marijuana, prior to him getting behind the wheel of the Chevy.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Jonathan Selkove, 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, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, John W. Kosinski, Chief of the Vehicular Homicide Unit and Deputy Bureau Chief, and Kenneth A. Appelbaum, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

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