



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

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



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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

**BROOKLYN MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON AFTER PLEADING GUILTY
TO AGGRAVATED VEHICULAR HOMICIDE FOR CRASH THAT KILLED A MAN AND HIS TWO DOGS**

Four Other People Injured in Seven-Car Pile Up Caused by Drunk Driving Defendant

Queens District Melinda Katz announced today that Alex Elicier, 31, of Hart Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant has been sentenced to up to 15 years in prison after pleading guilty to aggravated vehicular homicide and other crimes. The defendant admitted he got behind the wheel of a car after drinking alcohol and smoking marijuana in August 2018. The ensuing car crash caused by the defendant killed a 38-year-old Brooklyn man, his dogs and injured four other people.

District Attorney Katz said, "A man is dead because the defendant chose to get high and drive. Getting behind the wheel of a car after smoking and drinking endangers everyone on the road. In this instance, a loved one is tragically gone, as well as the family's beloved dogs. The defendant has admitted his guilt and the Court has now ordered him to prison for his criminal actions."

Elicier pleaded guilty on July 30, 2020 to aggravated vehicular homicide, assault in the second degree and two counts of overdriving, torturing or injuring an animal before Queens Supreme Court Justice Michael Aloise. This morning, Justice Aloise sentenced Elicier to 6 to 15 years in prison.

District Attorney Katz said the defendant was driving a Chevy northbound on the Van Wyck Expressway near Jewel Avenue shortly before 5 a.m. on August 18, 2018. The defendant weaved in and out of the early morning traffic and crossed multiple lanes. At more than 80 mph, Elicier crashed into the back of an Acura that was being driven by Jasmine Rodriguez, 27. The woman was with her friend, Jairo Castano. His two dogs, Brooklyn and Honey, were in the back seat.

According to the charges, the impact of the collision forced the Acura into the center guardrail and sent it airborne. The Acura landed upside down on the southbound side of the Van Wyck Expressway, where it was struck by another vehicle. Mr. Castano, 38, was crushed on impact and died at the scene. His two dogs were thrown from the car and were also killed. Ms. Rodriguez survived the collision but sustained facial fractures, a broken arm and injuries to her torso.

In all, seven vehicles were either struck with debris or crashed in an effort to avoid being hit, including a TSA K-9 Unit that was headed to Kennedy International Airport. Five people, including the defendant, were injured in the collision.

DA Katz said the defendant was treated at a nearby hospital for head injuries. At that time, a Court-authorized search warrant was executed for the defendant's blood. Forty minutes after the crash, Elicier's blood alcohol level was .16. The defendant also tested positive for the presence of THC, a compound of marijuana, in his blood stream. Surveillance video showed the defendant at a strip club earlier in the evening, drinking Hennessy and smoking marijuana, before he got 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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