



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

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



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2023

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

LAURELTON MAN INDICTED FOR CAUSING LIE CRASH THAT KILLED TOW OPERATOR

Defendant Faces Up to 7 Years in Prison

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Denzel Porter was indicted and arraigned today on charges of vehicular manslaughter, driving under the influence of alcohol and other crimes. The defendant allegedly caused a chain of collisions on the Long Island Expressway that resulted in the death of a tow operator and serious injury to a motorist.

District Attorney Katz said: “There's nothing more selfish than getting behind the wheel and driving under the influence. Everyone with whom we share the road deserves our respect and consideration and has every right to reach their destination safely. The defendant is alleged to have been driving while intoxicated and will be held to account for the tragic consequences of that decision.”

Porter, 28, of Alecia Avenue in Laurelton, was arraigned before Queens Supreme Court Justice Gary Miret on an indictment charging him with vehicular assault in the first and second degree, assault in the second degree, vehicular manslaughter in second degree, criminally negligent homicide, operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol and operating or driving an unregistered motor vehicle. Justice Miret ordered the defendant to return to Court on May 2. If convicted, Porter faces up to seven years in prison.

According to the charges, on October 8, at approximately 3:30 a.m., Porter was driving with two female passengers at an extremely high speed in a Dodge Durango on the westbound side of the Long Island Expressway near Woodhaven Boulevard. At the same time, 47-year-old tow operator Carlos Santiago was outside his Ram truck on the right shoulder of the roadway helping 27-year-old motorist Rakiem Ali with his disabled Nissan sedan.

Porter's Dodge Durango slammed into a silver Volkswagen SUV driven by 66-year-old Peter Park and both the Dodge and Volkswagen then collided into the Nissan sedan, striking Santiago and Ali, who were standing nearby. Santiago was thrown towards the service road parallel to the expressway and suffered severe lower body trauma, including the loss of one of his legs.

The Nissan owner and tow operator were both taken to a local hospital. Santiago was pronounced dead as a result of his injuries. Ali required intensive surgical care for his injuries. Both passengers of the Dodge Durango and the Volkswagen driver were also taken to a local hospital for treatment of non-critical injuries.

Investigators responding to the scene of the accident observed the defendant exhibiting signs of intoxication.

The investigation was conducted by Detective James Conlon of the New York City Police Department's Collision Investigations Squad under the supervision Sergeant Robert Denig.

Assistant District Attorney Michael Bello, of the District Attorney's Felony Trials Bureau is prosecuting the case, with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Kenneth Koo of the Homicide Bureau under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney John W. Kosinski, Senior Deputy Chief, Assistant District Attorney Robin Leopold, Bureau Chief and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Supreme Court Trials Pishoy B. Yacoub.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

#

Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

