



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

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



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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

**TEEN DRIVER AND PARENTS CHARGED IN GRUESOME COLLISION
THAT KILLED 14-YEAR-OLD GIRL**

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that a teenage driver and his parents have been charged in connection with the death of a 14-year-old girl who was a passenger in a car sheared in half after crashing at more than 100 miles an hour into a parked UPS truck on a busy Queens thoroughfare. The victim, Fortune Williams, was ejected from the BMW and shortly afterward pronounced dead at the scene on North Conduit Avenue near 160th Street in Jamaica.

The unlicensed 16-year-old driver of the BMW, a gift from his father, is charged with manslaughter and reckless driving. While his junior license allowed him to drive when accompanied by a licensed driver at least 21 years of age, the defendant was alone in the car with the victim at the time of the May 17 crash. Prior to the fatal collision, in November 2022, witnesses from the defendant's school began seeing him regularly driving the same BMW to and from school unaccompanied by an adult. He was ticketed in November 2022 for driving without a license and driving while using a portable electronic device. His name is being withheld because of his age.

His parents are charged with endangering the welfare of a child and permitting unlicensed operation.

District Attorney Katz said: "We will argue that the horrific car crash that took Fortune Williams' young life was the result of recklessness and negligence, not only on the part of the minor behind the wheel, but the adults who put him in the driver's seat."

The now 17-year-old, of 227th Street in Springfield Gardens, was arraigned today on charges of manslaughter in the second degree; three counts of assault in the second degree; assault in the third degree; reckless endangerment in the second degree; endangering the welfare of a child; reckless driving; driving in excess of the maximum speed limit; unsafe lane change on a roadway laned for traffic; making an unlawful turn; two counts of operating a motor vehicle with a tinted windows; operating or driving a motor vehicle without a license; and operating a motor vehicle in violation of a restricted permit or license.

He faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted. His parents, Deo Ramnarine, 43, and Sean Smith, 39, also of 227th Street in Springfield Gardens, each face up to a year in prison.

Supreme Court Justice Kenneth C. Holder ordered the defendants to return to court on February 5.

According to the charges:

- On May 17, at approximately 6:38 pm, the defendant was driving a red 2005 BMW 325I westbound on North Conduit Avenue near 160th Street at a speed calculated at 101 miles per hour. The posted speed limit was 30 miles per hour.
- The teenager lost control of the vehicle when attempting to move from the left-center lane to the right-center lane and crashed into the back of a parked UPS truck. After hitting the truck, the BMW spun across the roadway and struck a tractor-trailer traveling westbound.
- As a result of the initial collision, Williams was ejected from the front passenger seat of the BMW into the back of the truck. She suffered severe head trauma and was pronounced dead at the scene.
- As a UPS employee was getting into his truck the BMW collided with the back of it, throwing the employee to the ground. He was taken to a local hospital where he was treated for a large

hematoma to his leg, a laceration to his face and a bruise to his chest. He has not returned to work since the incident and will require surgery to repair a torn muscle in his shoulder.

At the hospital where he was being treated for minor injuries, the defendant explained to police that he had picked Williams up at her home and was taking her to his grandmother's house. His father, who was with his son at the hospital, told police that while the BMW was registered in his name, he had bought the vehicle for his son and that the car was his son's.

Three weeks after the fatal crash, on June 7, Smith told the car's insurer that his son had driven the BMW approximately twice with him in the vehicle and that his son was a good driver.

Assistant District Attorneys Erin Mullins of the District Attorney's Career Criminal Major Crimes Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Michael Whitney, Bureau Chief and Roni C. Piplani, Deputy Chief along with Assistant District Attorney Joseph Randazzo of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys John Kosinski, Bureau Chief, Peter J. McCormack, III, Senior Deputy Chief and Karen Ross, Deputy Chief and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

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

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