



Orange County News

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District Attorney Hoovler Announces Prison Sentence in New Windsor Vehicular Manslaughter Case

*Defendant Who Struck and Killed a Pedestrian While Drunk
Sentenced to Maximum*

Orange County District Attorney David M. Hoovler announced on Thursday, May 11, 2017, that Michael Rule, age 33, of Pine Bush, was sentenced by Orange County Court Judge Craig Stephen Brown to 2 1/3 to 7 years in state prison in connection with his June 13, 2016, killing of Luis DeJesus. On January 5, 2017, Rule had pled guilty to one count of Vehicular Manslaughter in the Second Degree. The sentence the judge imposed was the maximum authorized for that charge.

On June 13, 2016, between approximately 6:15 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., Rule was driving on Route 300 in the Town of New Windsor. Luis DeJesus was also walking down the road, and Rule struck the pedestrian from behind, resulting in injuries that ultimately killed Mr. DeJesus.

Rule then left the scene of the collision. Another civilian attempted to aid Mr. DeJesus and stayed with him until the police and other first responders arrived. A few miles away in the Town of Newburgh, a couple, who had not seen the collision, saw Rule driving his car with extensive front end damage, so they followed him and called the police, because they suspected he had been involved in a collision. The civilians followed Rule for several miles, relaying Rule's license plate number and his direction of travel to police the entire time. The civilians continued to follow Rule and report to police, even after Rule got into the passenger seat of a car driven by another man, who had nothing to do with the collision. Police arrived within minutes and arrested Rule in the second car. A blood test done on Rule revealed that his blood-alcohol level was .15 percent. DNA evidence also linked Rule's car to the deceased pedestrian.

District Attorney Hoovler thanked the Town of New Windsor and Town of Newburgh Police Departments for their efforts in the investigation and prosecution of the case.

“This defendant was deserving of receiving the maximum sentence for this crime,” said District Attorney Hoovler. “Not only did this defendant place the entire community at risk by his decision to drive while severely intoxicated, but when he struck and killed an innocent man he compounded his crime by fleeing without even checking the condition of his victim. I am grateful not only for the professional response of the police, but also for the civilian motorists who went out of their way to aid the victim, and responsibly make appropriate reports to the police, thereby ensuring that the police were able to apprehend this defendant. Importantly, they did so without placing themselves or others at risk. All of us are entitled to be safe on our roadways and that is especially true of pedestrians, who haven’t even chosen to get into a car themselves. My office will continue to seek significant sentences for those who injure or kill others while driving drunk.”

District Attorney Hoovler commended Senior Assistant District Attorney Kelle Grimmer for her prosecution of the case.

