



OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND



Anne Colt Leitess, State's Attorney

Anne Arundel Justice

A Monthly News Digest from the Office of the State's Attorney for Anne Arundel County

A Message from Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess

Season Greetings and Happy New Year!

Welcome to the December edition of Anne Arundel Justice.

In this month's digest, you'll learn more about the prosecutions of two men for fatal traffic cases, a jury's conviction of a Millersville man for the overdose death of a teenager and more.

Be sure to follow us on our social media channels:

AnneArundelSAO on Instagram and Twitter
Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Office on Facebook.

I hope everyone has a safe and joyous holiday!

Glen Burnie Man Sentenced to 12 Years for Wrong Way Crash DUI on Route 32

On December 3, 2019, Christopher Thomas, 40, of Glen Burnie was sentenced to 12 years in prison for negligent manslaughter and driving under the influence (DUI) for killing Raymond McCarter.

The maximum sentence for manslaughter is 10 years and 2 years for DUI. Thomas entered a guilty plea to the charges on September 4, 2019.

Jury Convicts Millersville Man In Overdose Death of Teen

On December 11, 2019 a jury convicted Jason Patton Baker, 46, of Millersville of one count of involuntary manslaughter, distribution of fentanyl, reckless endangerment and other lesser included charges in the overdose death of 16-year-old, Josiah Klaes.

Baker is facing a maximum sentence of 35 years and will be sentenced on February 13, 2020 by the Honorable Donna

Drugged Driver Sentenced to 21 Years for Manslaughter and Assault

On December 4, 2019 Christopher Dillehunt, 29, of Queenstown was sentenced to 21 years in prison for one count of negligent manslaughter in the death of Laurel Zeiler and two counts of second degree assault for two surviving victims by the Honorable Robert J. Thompson.

On March 11, 2018, defendant Christopher Dillehunt was driving a Ford Taurus

"The defendant made the choice to get in the car and drive under the influence of alcohol and that resulted in the death of Raymond McCarter," said Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. "This case is a reminder of how dangerous drunk driving is and the terrible toll it can exact. It's my hope that the sentence provides a sense of solace to the family as they continue to heal from this tragedy."

On February 16, 2019, the defendant, later identified as Christopher Thomas, was driving a Ford F-150 pick-up truck west in the eastbound lanes on MD Route 32 when he collided with a Toyota Camry traveling eastbound on MD Route 32, driven by the victim, later identified as Raymond McCarter. The force of the impact caused Mr. McCarter's vehicle to rotate counterclockwise eventually resting on the right side shoulder. Thomas' vehicle continued to travel west in the eastbound lanes before traveling off the right hand side of the roadway and stopping against a guardrail.

Mr. McCarter was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Assistant State's Attorney Carolynn Grammas prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel County.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Schaeffer.

"Mr. Baker sold drugs he knew were potentially lethal, going so far as to take into account the victim's age, height and weight before doing so. The defendant's greed and his lack of humanity in selling deadly drugs to a teenager is beyond disturbing. Josiah's family has suffered a devastating loss, and I am grateful that the jury recognized that the defendant's actions led to the victim's death and held him accountable. This case was successful due to the excellent police work by Anne Arundel County detectives and prosecutor Jason Steinhardt," said Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess.

On January 19, 2018, Anne Arundel County police officers responded to the 8200 block of Kramer Court in Glen Burnie to find the victim, later identified as Josiah Klaes, in cardiac arrest. He was unresponsive upon their arrival and pronounced deceased on the scene.

During the investigation, Anne Arundel County detectives spoke with the victim's brother who said Josiah had recently purchased marijuana from a white male by the name of 'Baker' and later identified as Jason Patton Baker. A friend of the victim advised police he witnessed several drug transactions of heroin and marijuana between Baker and Josiah. An analysis of the victim's cellphone found numerous text messages between the victim and defendant which detailed drug transactions. During one of the text message exchanges, Baker asked Josiah his age, and the victim replied with his weight and height and told him that he was 16 years old.

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner determined that

eastbound on U.S. Route 50 when he exited onto Buschs Frontage Road, travelling more than 70 mph and crossed over the double yellow center line to pass a slower moving vehicle. The speed limit on Buschs Frontage Road is 40 mph. While traveling eastbound in the westbound lane, the defendant struck a Toyota Camry driven by the victim, Laurel Zeiler. Zeiler's daughter, Cynthia Lynn Whittington, was also in the car. After colliding with the victim's automobile, Dillehunt's car began to rotate in a counterclockwise direction while continuing to travel in an eastbound direction when it slid sideways into a Ford F-150 pick-up truck, which was traveling west in the westbound lane. The Ford F-150 was driven by Kathi Ridgley with Aaron Catterton as a passenger.

Ms. Zeiler was transported to University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore where she later succumbed to her injuries. Ms. Ridgley sustained life-altering injuries.

"This is another tragic case showing the deadly consequences made by an individual who chose to operate a motor vehicle while under the influence of drugs," said Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. "A mother and daughter were making a routine trip to the convenience store when the defendant's criminal actions caused the death of Laurel Zeiler. I hope that today's sentence brings some sense of peace to the families and deters other drivers who think about driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol."

Assistant State's Attorney Carolynn Grammas prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel

Josiah died as a direct result of fentanyl intoxication. County.

Click [here](#) to read more.

On February 3, 2018, Baker was arrested for possession of a controlled dangerous substance. A search warrant was obtained and executed for Baker's phone. The device phone number matched the contact in Klaes' phone. Additionally, further investigation found that Baker sold Josiah fentanyl instead of heroin, which led to the fatal overdose.

Anne Arundel County Detective Morehouse investigated this matter and Assistant State's Attorney Jason Steinhardt prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel County.

Office of the State's Attorney Spread Holiday Cheer to Area Families



'Tis the season!

On Wednesday, Dec. 18, the Office of the State's Attorney for Anne Arundel County brought holiday cheer to two deserving local families by donating clothing, toys and gift cards.

Through Anne Arundel County Department of Health's Strengthening Families program, an evidence-based program which offers parenting assistance to high-risk families in need, the SAO received the names and gift ideas for five children and four adults. We created ornaments representing each family member and hung them on the office's Sharing Tree. Employees from the office selected an ornament and donated the gifts.

"It's truly a gift to be able to give back and serve others during the holiday season,"

said State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. "During the holiday season, I hope we all take the time to reflect on how fortunate many of us are and how a small act of kindness can go a very long way. I hope everyone has a joyous and safe holiday."

To learn more about the Strengthening Families Program, click [here](#).

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