



OFFICE OF THE MERCER COUNTY PROSECUTOR

ANGELO J. ONOFRI

Prosecutor

VELDON HARRIS

Chief of County Detectives

240 West State Street, 8th Floor

P.O. Box 8068

Trenton, New Jersey 08650-0068

Phone: (609) 989-6350

Fax: (609) 989-0161

mercercountyprosecutor.com

DORIS M. GALUCHIE

First Assistant Prosecutor

ROBERT DISPOTO

Deputy Chief of County Detectives

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CONTACT: Casey A. DeBlasio
(609) 989-6379

Jackson Man Indicted for Aggravated Manslaughter

A Jackson, NJ man who struck and killed a young woman in Hamilton Township last September while under the influence of narcotics was indicted last week for aggravated manslaughter, Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri reported.

A Mercer County grand jury returned a 15-count indictment charging **Chandler Heaviside**, age 23, with first-degree aggravated manslaughter, second-degree eluding, first-degree death by auto within 1,000 feet of a school zone, second-degree death by auto, third-degree unlicensed driver causing death to another, second-degree leaving the scene of a motor vehicle accident resulting in death, two counts of fourth-degree assault by auto, third-degree possession of a controlled dangerous substance, third-degree possession of a controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribute, second-degree possession of a controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribute within 500 feet of a public park, third-degree possession of a controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribute within 1,000 feet of a school, fourth-degree tampering, fourth-degree resisting arrest by flight and third-degree aggravated assault on a law enforcement officer. He remains in the Mercer County Correction Center.

On September 12, 2016, just before 10 p.m., the New Jersey State Police Crime Suppression Unit was conducting a narcotics investigation in Trenton. After observing an illegal drug transaction in the area of Laurel Place and Laurel Drive, Crime Suppression Units attempted to conduct a motor vehicle stop on a gray Chevy Trailblazer. The vehicle fled the scene at a high rate of speed and was pursued by police with their emergency lights and siren activated. The pursuit led into Hamilton Township and the officers

terminated the pursuit in the area of the Whitehorse Circle as the suspect vehicle continued north on Broad Street. At the intersection of Broad Street and East Park Avenue, the suspect vehicle ran the red light and struck a black Honda Civic attempting a left hand turn on East Park Avenue. The Civic was struck in the passenger side door and forced into a telephone pole. The driver of the Trailblazer, later identified as Chandler Heaviside, exited the vehicle and fled on foot and was ultimately apprehended by the NJSP with assistance from the Trenton Police Street Crimes Unit.

The driver of the Honda Civic, 22-year-old Deja Farris of Trenton, was extricated from the vehicle and transported to Capital Health Regional Medical Center where she was pronounced dead. Heaviside's actions also caused non-fatal injuries to both passengers in his vehicle.

Heaviside was driving while under the influence of narcotics, and a search of the defendant at the time he was apprehended revealed heroin on his person.

The charges are a result of an investigation by Detective Tony Abaro of the Mercer County Prosecutor's Serious Collision Response Team, the Hamilton Township Police Division Traffic Unit, and the New Jersey State Police. Assistant Prosecutor Stacey Geurds presented the case to the grand jury.

Despite having been indicted, every defendant is presumed innocent until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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