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Man who drove intoxicated, injured Portland Police officer receives jail and probation sentence

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that 22-year-old Carlos Zamora received a jail and probation sentence for driving under the influence of intoxicants and striking a Portland Police officer who was assisting on an unrelated call for service.

“The outcome of this could have been entirely different. Mr. Zamora could have killed this officer,” said Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Shawn Overstreet, who prosecuted this case. “This situation happened at night, on a well-lit road that had multiple police cars on scene with their red and blue lights flashing. It should have been apparent to anybody that police were on scene and that conditions warranted extra care such as slowing down. Unfortunately, this isn’t the first time members of our law enforcement community have been hit while on the job because of an impaired driver. Officers put themselves in harm’s way every time they start a new shift. In this case, Officer Brooks reacted the moment he realized he was about to be struck by Mr. Zamora’s vehicle and it’s only because of his reaction that he wasn’t seriously injured or killed.”

Zamora appeared in Multnomah County Circuit Court and pleaded guilty to one count of driving under the influence of intoxicants and felony failure to performing the duties of a driver.

This investigation started on May 26, 2019 when Officer Andrew Brooks was assisting other members of East Precinct in the 12400 block of Southeast Powell Boulevard on reports of a disturbance involving an intoxicated person. Officer Brooks parked his vehicle in the westbound lane of Southeast Powell Boulevard with his patrol vehicle’s emergency lights activated to block traffic.

As officers were getting ready to clear the scene, Officer Brooks went back to his patrol car and was about to get in when he saw a vehicle approaching. The officer feared that he was about to be hit so he attempted to get out of the way while shining his flashlight towards the vehicle in an effort to get the driver, later identified as Zamora, to notice him.

The officer was unable to get out of the way and was sideswiped by Zamora’s vehicle. When the impact occurred, Officer Brooks was standing between the driver side of his vehicle and the passenger side of Zamora’s vehicle. As a result, the side-mirror of Zamora’s vehicle struck Officer Brooks. Paramedics transported him to the hospital for evaluation. His injuries included visible abrasions and bruising to his legs.

Another officer on scene started chasing Zamora’s vehicle as he continued to drive away from the scene. Zamora stopped his vehicle inside the parking lot of a nearby store. Officers on scene reported that he was clearly intoxicated.

Law enforcement estimated that at the time of the crash, Zamora was traveling approximately five miles per hour over the posted speed limit. Zamora later admitted that he had consumed multiple shots of tequila prior to the crash and used drugs.

During this investigation, law enforcement determined Zamora’s blood alcohol content was 0.15%.

The court sentenced Zamora to two days in jail and 36 months of formal probation. He will need to undergo an alcohol assessment and complete any treatment and attend the DUII Impact Panel. His driving privileges will be revoked for one year. If Zamora fails to complete any part of his probation, the court could impose additional jail time and a \$2,000 fine.

The Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office wishes to remind the public of the state’s “Move Over Law.”

Under ORS 811.147, if you, while driving, come upon any type of police car or emergency vehicle pulled over with its emergency lights flashing, you must move over into another lane. If you cannot change lanes safely, you must slow down to a speed that is at least five miles per hour below the posted or designated speed limit. In all cases, you as the driver must try to provide as much room as possible for the emergency vehicle, tow truck or roadside assistance vehicle.

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