



Rod Underhill, District Attorney
1021 Southwest Fourth Avenue, Room 600
Portland, Oregon 97204-1193
Phone: 503-988-3162
www.mcda.us

January 24, 2020

Adam Valle receives an 85 month prison sentence for recklessly causing the death of a 19 year old

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that 27-year-old Adam Alexander Valle changed his plea and received an 85 month prison sentence for recklessly causing the death of 19-year-old Heaven Leigh Mathews while operating a stolen vehicle under the influence of methamphetamine.

“Heaven loved everyone unconditionally,” her father Gary Mathews said in court. “This was the worst thing to happen to our family. It has devastated us. Heaven was an incredible person. She was able to be friends to so many people. She was such a kind heart.”

Her family expressed immense compassion toward Valle and informed the court that they want to support him during his time in custody so that he re-enters our community successfully.

After pleading guilty to one count of manslaughter in the second degree, one count of unauthorized use of a vehicle, one count of fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer and one count of driving under the influence of intoxicants, the court sentenced Valle to 85 months in prison followed by three years of post-prison supervision. Valle will have to pay approximately \$45,000 in restitution. Heaven’s family supports the resolution of this case.

This investigation started on March 9, 2019 at approximately 11 p.m. when officers assigned to the Portland Police Bureau’s East Precinct attempted to stop a vehicle in the area of Southeast 124th Avenue and Southeast Sherman Street after noticing the driver commit several traffic violations. While attempting to stop the vehicle, officers learned the vehicle, a 2004 Subaru Legacy, had previously been reported stolen.

The driver, later identified as Valle, refused to pull over and immediately accelerated away in an attempt to elude police.

Officers immediately recognized the dangerousness of Valle’s driving. Police did not pursue the vehicle and turned off their overhead lights and sirens.

Other officers – while on patrol – continued to look for the vehicle in the area, which was eventually located near the intersection of Southeast Division Street and Southeast 122nd Avenue. Police found the vehicle crashed into a steel light pole. The high-speed impact resulted in half of the vehicle being impaled by the pole.

A witness spoke with police and reported that immediately after the crash she saw Valle exit the vehicle and start limping away.

Police located Valle about a block away from the crash scene.

During this investigation, law enforcement learned Valle had likely been awake for several days with little to no sleep and that he was using methamphetamine.

When paramedics told Valle that he had been involved in a crash and that his passenger died, Valle started laughing.

Officers determined Heaven was seated in the front passenger seat of the vehicle Valle was driving, and that the passenger side of the vehicle took nearly the entire brunt of the impact.

Heaven died on scene despite the immediate first aid rendered by officers and paramedics.

The owner of the Subaru provided the District Attorney’s Office a victim impact statement that was presented to the court.

The impact letter read in part, "I would like the court and Mr. Valle to know how the theft and wrecking of my car has affected my life. The car that was stolen by Mr. Valle was payed off and was my only form of transportation."

As a result, the victim and her husband had to purchase a new vehicle, which caused them to get behind on their rent.

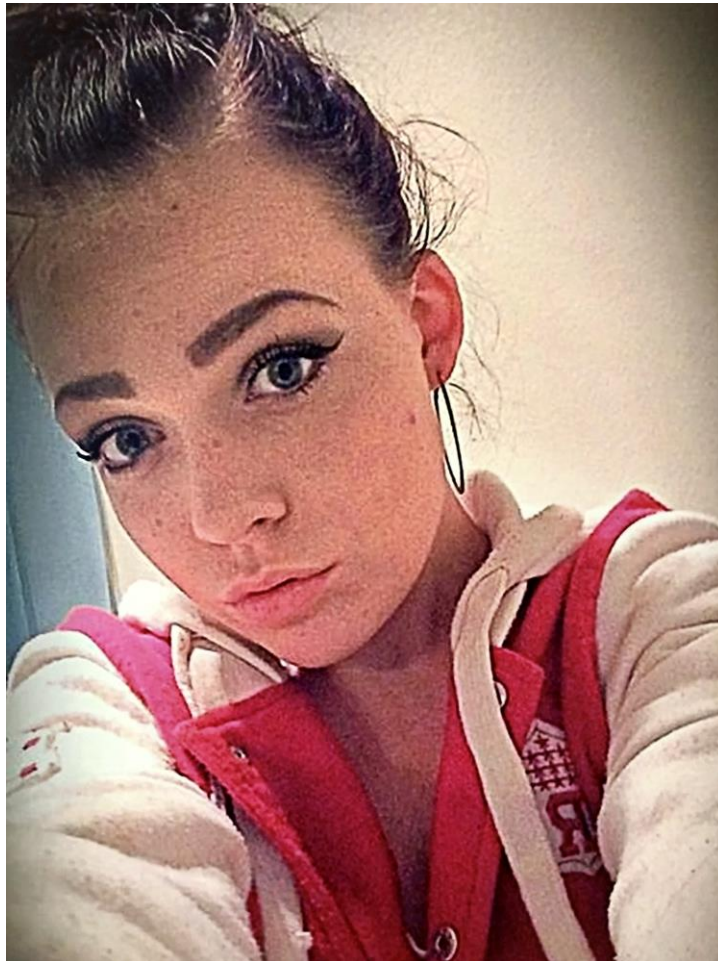
"We have been trying to fight getting evicted. This has all trickled down from the theft of my Subaru. In the end, a young woman lost her life, a young man stands before the court ready for sentencing, and my husband and I are facing being homeless. No one wins in this tragic story," the victim's impact statement read.

Valle's driving privileges will be permanently revoked.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office recognizes Portland Police Officer Mark Gaither, Officer Aaron Holwege, Officer Christopher Johnson, Officer Andrew Braun and the other officers assigned to the PPB East Precinct and PPB Traffic Division for their dedicated efforts investigating this case.

Multnomah County Senior Deputy District Attorney Glen Banfield prosecuted this case.

A photo of Heaven is being included with this press release with permission of her family.



#MCDA#