



Newark PD Officer Charged

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Newark Police Officer Charged with Vehicle Homicide

Newark— Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore N. Stephens, II, announced today that Newark Police Officer Louis Santiago, 25, of Bloomfield has been charged with reckless vehicular homicide, desecrating human remains and related charges for hitting a pedestrian on the Garden State Parkway, leaving the scene, then coming back and putting the victim in his car and then later returning to the scene with the victim's dead body.

Also charged was Albert Guzman, 25, of Newark, the passenger in the car. He was charged with conspiracy to desecrate human remains, hindering apprehension, and conspiracy to hinder apprehension and tamper with physical evidence.

Annette Santiago, 53, of Bloomfield, the mother of Louis Santiago, was charged with the same offenses as Guzman.

The preliminary investigation indicates that on Nov. 1, 2021, around 3:00 am a 2005 Honda Accord driven by Santiago, who was off duty, was traveling northbound on the Garden State Parkway, near exit 151. Santiago failed to maintain his lane and traveled on the right shoulder of the Garden State Parkway striking Damian Z. Dymka, a 29-year-old nurse from Garfield in Bergen County.

It is alleged that after striking the victim, neither Santiago nor Guzman called 911 or rendered aid but returned to the scene multiple times before Santiago loaded the victim into the Honda and removed him from the scene. Santiago then took the body to his home in Bloomfield where he, his mother and Guzman allegedly discussed what to do with the body. Eventually, Santiago went back to the scene.

Santiago's father, who is a lieutenant in the Newark Police Department, called 911 and reported that his son was in an accident. When the New Jersey State Police arrived, the victim was dead in the back seat of the car.

In addition to vehicular homicide, Santiago was charged with leaving the scene of crash resulting in death, endangering an injured victim, desecrating/moving human remains, hindering one's own apprehension, conspiracy to hinder prosecution, tampering with physical evidence, obstructing the administration of law, and two counts of official misconduct.

All three defendants have been arrested, charged, and released with conditions.

These are accusations. All defendants are presumed innocent unless and until they enter a guilty plea or are found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.



Louis Santiago