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Contact:

William S. Porter

Assistant District Attorney

Fannin County, Texas

101 East Sam Rayburn Drive, Suite 301

Bonham, Texas 75418

903.583.7448

903.583.7682 (fax)

wporter@fanninco.net

(Bonham, Texas – August 12, 2020) On Monday, August 10, 2020 in the 336th District Court of Fannin County, Defendant Keagan Hunter Cannaday pled guilty to three charges of Intoxicated Manslaughter and two charges of Intoxicated Assault. The Hon. Judge Laurie Blake of the 336th District Court then presided over a sentencing hearing. Cannaday, agreed to waive a trial by jury and requested the Court to determine his sentence. Cannaday was given the maximum sentence of 20 years in prison in the manslaughter cases and 10 years in the assault cases.

The incident giving rise to the case occurred almost a year earlier on August 30, 2019, when just before midnight Arnulfo Alvarez of Sulphur Springs, along with his pregnant wife Juana Torres, and their two sons Lucas and Andres, were traveling on Highway 11 just west of Whitewright. As they approached a narrow bridge, Alvarez could see headlights in his lane coming from the opposite direction at a high rate of speed. Alvarez, trapped on the bridge, could only slam on his breaks and brace himself for impact. The headlights came from a 2007 Dodge Ram 2500 driven by the then 20-year old Cannaday. Intoxicated from beer purchased by a friend, the underage Cannaday lost control of his truck as he approached the bridge from the other end as Alvarez. Cannaday's truck first struck the guardrail which sent him flying into the oncoming lane of traffic straight into the path of Alvarez. DPS Trooper Devon Cooper, who responded to the scene and testified at the sentencing hearing, stated the collision could only be described as "violent." As Cannaday's truck ripped through the passenger side of Alvarez's truck, the pregnant Torres, the unborn child and her 2-year old son Lucas Alvarez seated directly behind her, were killed instantly. Cannaday's truck was launched over the concrete wall of the bridge and landed some distance away. Bystanders, who arrived shortly after the accident, pulled Cannaday from his burning vehicle. Cannaday and 3-year old victim Andres Alvarez were care-flighted to Metroplex hospitals while Arnulfo Alvarez was taken by ambulance to a McKinney Hospital.

Testifying at the August 10 sentencing hearing Alvarez described in vivid detail the harrowing experience of the aftermath of the crash. An emotional Alvarez described how he laid down and pulled his son Andres out of the truck and then began his frantic search for his wife and other son. As Judge Laurine Blake listened, the mother of Juana Torres, Mary Luna, described the impact the night had on them and hole that is now left their family. Officer Charles Gage, a

former Trenton police officer, testified how even now, almost a year later, he is still haunted by memories of that night.

On August 11, Cannaday himself spent the morning on the witness stand as the hearing continued. Cannaday agreed that day he met a friend, 24-year old Aaron Mussett, who purchased him a 12-pack of Corona beer at a local convenience store. Cannaday's admission confirmed the findings of Teresa Hall of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission who conducted a source investigation and provided surveillance video of Mussett purchasing the beer for Cannaday. Cannaday also confirmed Hall's findings that he and Mussett drove in separate vehicles to the Cowboy Club, a bar in Van Alstyne. Cannaday admitted during the investigation of the case he told DPS troopers he drank 4 or 5 beers before he got to the Cowboy Club. Initially, the Cowboy Club denied Cannaday entry, as he was underage, but they allowed him inside after his father arrived and agreed to watch over him. Surveillance video obtained by Hall from the Cowboy Club showed Cannaday was unable to obtain more alcohol inside the club. Around 11:20 p.m. Cannaday and Mussett left Van Alstyne and made their way back to Fannin County via Highway 11, where the crash took place. Mussett testified he was traveling behind Cannaday going around 65-75 mph while Cannaday was likely traveling upwards of 85 mph. Three hours after the crash, a sample of Cannaday's blood was taken and when analyzed showed Cannaday's blood alcohol concentration to be .141 g/ml. The legal limit is .08 g/ml.

Prosecutors from the Fannin County District Attorney's Office urged the court in their closing arguments to consider stacking Cannaday's sentences which would require Cannaday to serve the sentence in each and every case separately from the other sentence. Judge Laurie Blake, recognizing the seriousness of the crime and the devastating loss sustained by the Alvarez and Torres families, gave the maximum sentence of 20 years and 10 years in all cases, but told a tearful Cannaday his decision to accept responsibility was a major factor in her decision to not stack his sentences. Under Texas law, Cannaday must serve at least half of his sentence before becoming eligible for parole.