



U.S. Department of Justice

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Maryland Woman Convicted of Negligent Homicide, Other Charges In Fatal Crash Near Dupont Circle - She Left the Scene After Hitting the Victim -**

WASHINGTON - Jorida Davidson, 31, of Chevy Chase, Maryland, was convicted by a jury today of negligent homicide and other charges stemming from a traffic accident in October 2010 that killed a woman near Dupont Circle, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

The verdict followed a trial in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. The jury was unable to reach a verdict on a charge of voluntary manslaughter, but convicted Davidson of the charge of negligent homicide. The jury also convicted Davidson of charges of leaving the scene of a collision involving injury and driving while under the influence of alcohol.

The Honorable Lynn Leibovitz ordered Davidson jailed pending sentencing on September 9, 2011. Davidson faces up to five years in prison on the negligent homicide charge. She faces up to six months in jail for leaving the scene of a collision involving injury, along with a fine of up to \$500, and up to 90 days in jail and a fine of up to \$300 for driving while under the influence.

According to the government's evidence, on October 7, 2010, at about 1:30 a.m., Davidson was operating a 2000 Lexus sport utility vehicle heading northbound on Connecticut Avenue NW, just south of Dupont Circle. She was driving in a lane that would take her into a tunnel that goes under Dupont Circle. At almost the last possible instant, the defendant rapidly changed lanes to avoid going into the tunnel, shifting to a non-tunnel lane on Connecticut Avenue.

At about the same time, the victim, Kiela Ryan, 24, was exiting from a legally parked car on the right side of the street. The defendant hit Ms. Ryan - making no attempt to brake or sound her horn - and then kept driving. An eyewitness got on a bicycle, pursued Davidson's vehicle and observed the defendant and made a mental note of her car's tag number.

Davidson, meanwhile, continued driving to her condominium building in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Police from Montgomery County, Maryland found her in the basement garage there, sitting in her vehicle, at about 2:30 a.m. The right front headlight of the vehicle was damaged. The ignition was off, and Davidson had the keys to the Lexus in her hand. She smelled of alcohol and claimed not to know what had happened.

After she was struck, Ms. Ryan was taken to a hospital, where she later died.

According to the government's evidence, the accident was the latest in a series of incidents involving Davidson's driving, all in the District of Columbia. She was cited in August 2005 for failure to keep in a proper lane and in October 2005 for passing a stop sign. She also was convicted in a February 2006 incident in which she was caught going more than 30 miles an hour over the speed limit. In July 2008, after a couple of glasses of wine, she drove into the back of a car. And in July 2010, again after a couple of glasses of wine, she drove into a parked car.

In announcing the verdict, U.S. Attorney Machen commended those who worked on the case from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), including Second District Officers Michael O'Dea and Donald Movers; Officer Justin Markiewicz; Lt. Craig Royal; Major Crash Investigation Unit Detectives Jeff Folts, Michael Miler and Sheryl Harley, and Mobile Crime Officers Ridley Durham, Kemper Agee and Brenda Floyd.

He also cited the efforts of the Montgomery County Police, including Sgt. Douglas Carr, Corporal Nancy Swandic and Officer Bill Morrison.

U.S. Attorney Machen also acknowledged the work of those who handled the case in the U.S. Attorney's Office, including David Foster and Marcey Rinker of the Victim Witness Assistance Unit; Ron Royal, of Litigation Services; Paralegal San Lane, and Interns Elizabeth Reiser-Murphy and Justin deBettencourt. Finally, he praised the work of Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Liebman, who investigated and prosecuted the case.