

JEFFREY S. ROSELL
DISTRICT ATTORNEY



**OFFICE OF
THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ**

Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street, Room 200
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-2400
dao@co.santa-cruz.ca.us

Website

<http://datinternet.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/>

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Contact: Alex Byers (831) 454-2400

BENSON SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR VEHICULAR MANSLAUGHTER

Santa Cruz County District Attorney Jeffrey S. Rosell announced that Kristofor Benson was sentenced to six years in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated, causing the death Hannah Milkowski.

On the morning of June 4, 2017 at approximately 9:30 a.m., Benson and Milkowski drove from Benson's residence in Scotts Valley, towards the beach. Benson was impaired by both drugs and alcohol and had a blood alcohol level of close to three times the legal limit. Minutes from the residence Benson, who was driving at an unsafe speed, lost control of his vehicle and collided with a utility pole. Milkowski, who was unrestrained, suffered fatal injuries.

Following the crash, Benson, who turned down medical assistance from bystanders, drove recklessly from Scotts Valley, southbound down Highway 17, and onto Highway 1 as he attempted to get medical aid for Milkowski. Benson crashed a second time at the off ramp at Soquel Drive.

The emotional sentencing hearing was attended by Milkowski's mother, who asked the Honorable Judge Stephen Siegel to sentence Benson to the maximum possible term under the law. A representative from Mothers Against Drunk Driving also attended the hearing and reminded the court of the dangers of driving while impaired, and the fact that Milkowski's death was 100% preventable.

Assistant District Attorney Alex Byers prosecuted the case and was pleased with the sentence. He said, "The defendant made some very careless decisions that day, and consequently, an innocent life was lost. I am pleased that he will be held fully accountable for his actions in this case, and that he will spend the next several years of his life behind bars."