



PRESS RELEASE

Intoxicated Driver Gets 10 Years for Fatal DWI Crash

May 9, 2017

Bryan, TX — Erick Sanchez-Zepeda, 24, of Bryan, was sentenced yesterday to 10 years in prison by Magistrate Judge Misty Swan after he plead guilty to Manslaughter in the 272nd District Court.

In the early morning hours of May 31, 2014, Sanchez-Zepeda had been drinking alcohol with his friend German Rodarte at a local night club in Bryan. Around 2:30 in the morning they went to a female friend's house in Bryan where they continued drinking beer. The pair were told to leave because they were making too much noise and convinced the female to go with them in Sanchez Zepeda's four door Honda Accord.

They decided that the female would sit in the driver's seat between Sanchez-Zepeda's legs and operated the steering wheel. While he operated the peddles. This decision was made due to Sanchez-Zepeda being too intoxicated to drive and he wanted the female to help him drive.

With Rodarte in the passenger seat, and Sanchez-Zepeda and the female driving, the group drove onto William Joel Bryan Pkwy and headed out of town via Sandy Point Road. While the vehicle was going 99 miles an hour on the two-lane country the car left the roadway as the road began a large gradual turn. As the car left the road, the steering wheel was jerked to the left resulting in the car beginning to spin. The Honda Accord careened into the ditch on the other side of the road and crashed through a welded pipe fence.

When the car came to a stop Sanchez-Zepeda and the female were only slightly injured. Rodarte in the passenger seat was unresponsive. Emergency crews cut the group out of the vehicle and all three were rushed to St. Joseph's Hospital. Rodarte was pronounced dead shortly after arriving at the hospital while the other two were treated for minor injuries and released. Rodarte was only 24 years old at the time of his death.

Sanchez-Zepeda's blood alcohol level was over twice the legal limit. He faced a possible punishment range of 2-20 years in prison with the legal possibility of probation. He had never been in trouble with the law before.

“Intoxicated Driving, even the first time, cost lives in the Brazos Valley far too often. The loss of a human life due this defendant's selfish decision to drive while intoxicated demands a prison sentence.”

- R. Clay Kimbrough

