



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE MEDIA RELATIONS DIVISION

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April 26, 2013

Professor Ordered To Stand Trial In UCLA Lab Fire Case

LOS ANGELES – A UCLA chemistry professor was ordered to stand trial today on felony charges related to a 2008 laboratory fire at UCLA that claimed the life of a 23-year-old staff research assistant, the District Attorney's Office announced.

Judge Lisa Lench ordered Patrick Harran to stand trial on three felony counts of violating occupational health and safety standards that caused the death of Sheharbano "Sheri" Sangji.

The victim died of severe burns stemming from a fire that occurred on Dec. 29, 2008, in Harran's organic chemistry laboratory. The young woman was not wearing a protective lab coat when transferring highly flammable tert-Butyllithium, which spilled from a syringe and ignited. She died from her injuries 18 days after the fire, on Jan. 16, 2009.

Harran, 43, returns to court May 9 for arraignment in Department 100, Criminal Justice Center. He is out on his own recognizance. If convicted, he faces up to 4-1/2 years in state prison.

Deputy District Attorneys Craig Hum and Marguerite Rizzo are handling the case for the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Division's Environmental Safety Section.

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