

Jackie Lacey
District Attorney
<http://da.lacounty.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Sarah Ardalani
Public Information Officer
213-257-2000
SArdalani@da.lacounty.gov
Twitter: @LADAOffice

June 3, 2016

Man Convicted of Murder for Fatal DUI Crash in Palmdale

A 24-year-old man was convicted yesterday of driving under the influence of alcohol and killing a man who was traveling home from work, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

The jury deliberated for less than three hours before finding Jeffrey Cole Brooks (dob 7/24/91) of Lancaster guilty of second-degree murder in case MA064589.

Sentencing for the defendant is scheduled for July 1 in Department A18 at the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Antelope Valley Branch. Brooks faces a maximum possible sentence of 15 years to life in state prison.

Deputy District Attorney Daniel Rochmes, who prosecuted the case, said on the evening of September 26, 2014, the defendant drove his 2005 Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution to the Park and Ride on Avenue S in Palmdale to meet friends. The group was taking a "party bus" to a club in Los Angeles.

According to court testimony, Brooks began drinking alcohol in the parking lot before boarding the bus and while on the bus. When the defendant arrived at the club, he continued to drink with his friends, the prosecutor added.

At the end of the night, the bus transported Brooks and his friends back to Palmdale and dropped them off at the Park and Ride. Although the defendant's friends warned him he was too drunk to drive, Brooks got into the driver's seat of his car and exited the parking lot onto Avenue S, according to the prosecutor.

As Brooks drove eastbound at high speeds, he rear-ended victim Daniel Eduardo Orellana, 21, who was stopped at a red light on his commute home from work. The impact of the collision caused Orellana's car to burst into flames and spin across the intersection, the prosecutor said.

At trial, an expert collision reconstructionist with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department testified that the defendant was driving more than 88 miles per hour when he struck the victim. Additionally, a

sheriff's department criminalist testified that Brooks' blood-alcohol level was between 0.27% and 0.30% at the time of the collision.

Furthermore, at the time of the crash, Brooks was on probation in San Diego County for alcohol-related reckless driving. He had attended court-ordered DUI education classes, which emphasized the dangers of driving under the influence, the prosecutor said.

The case was investigated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Palmdale Station.

###

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.