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Underage Drunk Driver Sentenced to Prison for Crash That Killed One and Seriously Injured Three

Today, Malakeh Ghaleb Jaber (23, of Fresno) was sentenced to ten years and four months in state prison for gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated and driving under the influence with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) over 0.08%, causing great bodily injury. The sentence follows Jaber's guilty plea on May 28, 2025, and was handed down by the Honorable Houry Sanderson of the Fresno County Superior Court.

The charges stem from a crash that occurred on August 7, 2021, at approximately 11:30 p.m., when Jaber—then 19 years old—was driving southbound on Chestnut Avenue at a high rate of speed approaching Herndon Avenue in Fresno. She had four passengers in her vehicle, including Andre Aguilar (22, of Fresno) and three others aged 20, 20, and 21. Jaber failed to navigate a curve in the roadway, struck a light pole, and caused the vehicle to roll. All passengers, except for Jaber, were ejected. Each sustained serious injuries, and Aguilar later died at a local hospital.

Responding officers from the Fresno Police Department observed objective signs of alcohol impairment and recovered a fake ID belonging to Jaber in the gutter next to the overturned vehicle. In her initial statements, Jaber claimed she had not consumed alcohol, citing religious beliefs. However, testing later confirmed she had a BAC above a 0.08%, the legal limit for a person over the age of 21.

A follow-up investigation by the Fresno Police Department's Collision Reconstruction Unit (CRU) revealed photos and videos of Jaber drinking earlier that night, including one in which she is seen "shotgunning" a White Claw hard seltzer and stomping on the can—less than an hour before the crash. Vehicle data later extracted showed Jaber had been driving approximately 94 mph in a 35-mph zone at the time of the crash.

Investigators determined that Jaber and three passengers had left a birthday party for a relative of one of the passengers before picking up Aguilar to head to another gathering. Just blocks from Aguilar's home, Jaber accelerated to 94 mph and crashed her car. There is no indication Aguilar knew she had been drinking prior to accepting the ride.

In addition to Aguilar's death, the other passengers suffered extensive injuries. One victim sustained severe leg fractures requiring surgery and resulting in probable lifelong disability. Another spent approximately 45 days hospitalized with brain injuries and fractures. A third suffered significant scalp lacerations and ankle trauma.

In response to the sentencing, Fresno County District Attorney Lisa Smittcamp emphasized the importance of responsible decision-making, particularly during the busy summer months. She stated that *"a night of fun with friends should never end in the death or serious injury of those you care about—or you being sent to prison."* Smittcamp added that *"as we head into the summer months, it's critical that people make smart choices: if you've been drinking, call a rideshare, phone a friend, or designate a sober driver. One bad decision behind the wheel can have lifelong consequences—for you, your passengers, and the families forever impacted by these senseless tragedies."*

The Fresno County District Attorney's Office extends its gratitude to the Fresno Police Department for their exceptional investigative work and continued commitment to keeping our roadways safe from impaired drivers.

This case was prosecuted by Senior Deputy District Attorney Steven Ueltzen, with assistance from Senior District Attorney Investigator Randall Paulson, as part of the Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driver Vertical Prosecution Program, funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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