

**News Release from
The Honorable Sandra Doorley
Monroe County District Attorney**

January 24, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**James Jacobs Sentenced to 7 1/3 – 22 Years for Aggravated Vehicular
Homicide and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree**

Rochester, NY- On Tuesday, January 24, 2023, 35-year-old James Jacobs was sentenced to 7 and 1/3 to 22 years in the New York State Department of Corrections for Aggravated Vehicular Homicide and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree. On March 20, 2022, James Jacobs caused the death of Stephen Kneeland by striking him head-on with his vehicle while intoxicated.

On March 20, 2022, around 9:45 PM, James Jacobs, who is a North Carolina resident, was heading eastbound on West Ridge Road in the Town of Parma when he crossed over the solid yellow lane marking into oncoming traffic. Jacobs struck Stephen Kneeland head-on, killing him instantly. Stephen's wife and children were traveling in the vehicle in front of him. The family was heading home to Lockport after a swim meet. Following the crash, police found a loaded firearm under the passenger seat of James Jacobs' vehicle. This case was investigated by the Monroe County Sheriff's Office and New York State Police.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Kelly Pettrone, of the Felony DWI Bureau.

“James Jacobs acted in an incredibly selfish manner, disregarding the safety of others when he chose to drive under the influence of alcohol, resulting in the tragic death of Stephen Kneeland,” said Assistant District Attorney Kelly Pettrone. “It is my hope that Stephen Kneeland's family can continue to heal while finding solace in knowing the defendant will spend up to 22 years in the New York State Department of Corrections. May they continue to mourn privately, outside the criminal justice system.”

“Stephen Kneeland, a father who was supporting his family, died because of James Jacobs' poor choices,” said District Attorney Sandra Doorley. “Although the defendant admitted guilt and is being sent to state prison, nothing will bring back Stephen Kneeland, a husband and father. Homicides caused by DWI are especially frustrating because these deaths are 100% preventable. It is my hope that the community remembers the family of Stephen Kneeland before anyone chooses to drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.”

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