

NEWS RELEASE

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Man sentenced to 20 years for killing woman in wrong-way collision

FLORENCE, Ariz. (June 4, 2019) – Globe resident Jaeden Spurgeon, 20, was sentenced to 20 years in prison by a judge. He pleaded guilty to one count of manslaughter and two counts of aggravated assault.

- Manslaughter, a class 2 felony
- Aggravated Assault, a class 3 felony, endangering an officer
- Aggravated Assault, a class 3 felony, recklessly causing an injury with a dangerous instrument

On April 10, 2017, Globe Police Department took a domestic violence report about a man who reportedly stole his girlfriend's black SUV. When police found the SUV, Jaeden Spurgeon was driving in a parking lot. When one officer tried to approach Spurgeon's car on foot, Spurgeon sped up and nearly hit the officer before he fled on US60. Multiple police agencies pursued Spurgeon for about 20 miles but stopped their pursuit after Spurgeon began driving the wrong-way on a divided highway for another nine miles. During that time, at least five people called 911. The defendant later admitted to police he was driving up to 100 miles per hour. When police caught up to Spurgeon, they discovered he collided with two other cars.

While Spurgeon was driving the wrong-way, he killed one woman and seriously injured her male passenger. The woman, pinned in the car, died of blunt force trauma. Another woman, driving a third car, was also involved in the collision, but was not injured.

Spurgeon pleaded guilty to manslaughter and two counts of aggravated assault. One count of aggravated assault was for intentionally putting an officer in reasonable fear of imminent physical injury. And the other aggravated assault for recklessly causing an injury with a dangerous instrument.

"We feel we have given the victims justice, but their pain continues. The decedent's mother told the judge that she is losing her eyesight. Her daughter promised to help her when she

went totally blind. Now, she needs her daughter's help, but the Defendant killed her while he was fleeing from the police." Prosecutor Matthew Reed said.

The judge sentenced Spurgeon to the maximum 20 years in prison. Spurgeon received a twelve-year sentence for manslaughter followed by another eight years for aggravated assault. The second aggravated assault sentence of 7.5 years will run concurrently with the manslaughter charge.

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Victim Statements

"The sentence will act as a stern deterrent. It's been two years, and I am still scared when I drive. You wonder when it will stop, but it's just something you have to learn to live with."

- Ana Campos, Victim

"The sentence was right. He killed my mom. He nearly killed me and he nearly hit that cop. Someone with a driver's license takes on a big responsibility. He put multiple lives in danger. I saw his head lights coming at me and I knew he was on the wrong side of the road. I believe he was fully aware of what he was doing. I just hope that he reflects on what he did and one day he will realize what he did to my grandma."

– Brandon Gee, Victim

"Nobody should think the sentence was too harsh. He was charged with second degree murder and he pleaded to manslaughter. He was charged with ten counts and he pleaded to three. If he went to trial on what he was charged with, he would have served a much longer sentence. The only person he cared about was himself. He was so selfish. I'm glad the judge considered his prior contact with the law. He is young, but he has four prior adjudications and one for a felony offence. The judge was fair. He considered the mitigation and the aggravation. Any judge who considered all the aggravation would have given that sentence."

– Karen Todd, Victim