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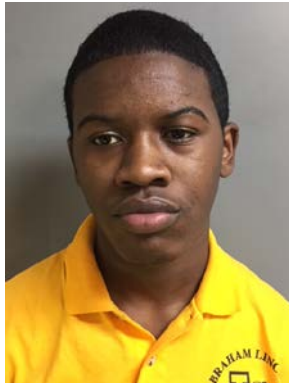
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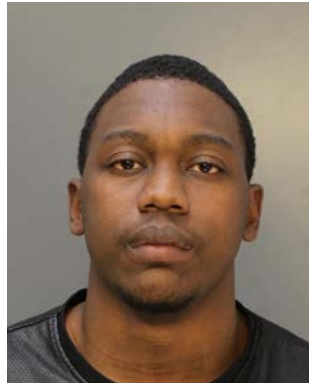
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KAREEM SAMUEL JR., DRIVER IN NORRISTOWN FATAL MAIN STREET CRASH, CHARGED WITH 3RD DEGREE MURDER; PASSENGERS CHARGED WITH BURGLARY

Police seeking Dawud McKnight, John Purdie III and Brian Walters



Kareem Samuel Jr.



Dawud McKnight



John Purdie III



Brian Walters

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (Nov. 17, 2017) — Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele, Chester County District Attorney Tom Hogan and Norristown Municipal Police Chief Mark E. Talbot announce the arrest of Kareem Samuel Jr., 16, of Philadelphia, on multiple felony charges related to the fatal Aug. 3, 2017 crash at Main and Hamilton streets in Norristown and the overnight burglary that led up to the crash. Four passengers in the car driven by Samuel—Dawud McKnight, 20, of Norristown; John Purdie III, 19, of Atlanta, Ga.; Brian Walters, 20, of Norristown; and a 17-year-old juvenile—were also charged and warrants have been issued for their arrest.

Samuel was charged as an adult with Third Degree Murder and Homicide by Vehicle for the death of his passenger Mark Thorne, 17, of Bala Cynwynd, as well as Aggravated Assault, Accidents Involving Death or Personal Injury Without Being Properly Licensed, Burglary, Criminal Trespass, and Fleeing or Attempting to Elude a Police Officer, all of which are felonies. He is also charged with multiple misdemeanor and summary offenses related to the crash and burglary.

McKnight, Purdie and Walters are charged with Burglary, Criminal Trespass, Theft by Unlawful Taking, Theft by Receiving Stolen Property, Criminal Mischief and Conspiracy to commit these offenses. The additional juvenile matter will be handled separately in juvenile court.

The joint investigation by the Montgomery County Detective Bureau and Norristown Police revealed that Norristown police officers were dispatched at 5:31 a.m. to a report of suspicious activity on Buttonwood Street involving the defendants and a white Hyundai sedan. Norristown police located the Hyundai at Buttonwood Street, and upon seeing police, the car immediately began to flee. From Buttonwood Street to the crash site, the investigation and video revealed that the Hyundai driven by Samuel failed to stop at 10 stop signs before running a solid red light at Hamilton and Main Streets at a speed of approximately 55 mph. The vehicle collided with a black Suburban driven by an off-duty Montgomery County deputy sheriff.

Thorne, who was in the backseat, was pronounced dead at the scene. Samuel attempted to flee from the scene but collapsed nearby. McKnight, the front seat passenger, fled the scene, and the three other backseat passengers were transported to Paoli Hospital with serious injuries. The deputy, who was driving alone in his vehicle, was treated for his injuries and released the same day.

Samuel was arraigned Nov. 15, 2017, before Magisterial District Judge Gregory Scott, who denied bail. The defendant was remanded to the Montgomery County Correctional Facility. A preliminary hearing was scheduled for 10 a.m., Nov. 27, 2017, before Magisterial District Judge Francis J. Lawrence Jr.

The case will be prosecuted by Lauren Heron, Assistant Chief of the Trials Division.

Approved for Release:

Kevin R. Steele

CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY