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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **ALEXANDER KOENIGSBERG ARRESTED FOR HOMICIDE BY VEHICLE IN JAN. 23rd FATAL CRASH IN CHELTENHAM**



**ALEXANDER KOENIGSBERG**

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (March 11, 2022) — Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele and Cheltenham Township Acting Police Chief John Slavin announce the arrest of Alexander Koenigsberg, 18, of Huntingdon Valley, for Homicide by Vehicle While DUI, Aggravated Assault and related charges stemming from the one-car crash that killed 20-year-old Nicholas Bednarek of Abington and seriously injured three other passengers.

The crash occurred at 1017 Greenwood Avenue at 1:34 a.m., Sunday, Jan. 23, 2022. Cheltenham Police responded to the crash scene and found four people in a 2006 Honda Civic and one male—Koenigsberg—lying on the ground outside of the vehicle's open driver's side door. All five of the car's occupants, ages 17 to 20 years old, were seriously injured and were transported to area hospitals. Bednarek was pronounced dead later that morning at Abington Memorial Hospital.

A joint crash investigation by Cheltenham Police and the Montgomery County Detective Bureau found that the Honda Civic driven by Koenigsberg was proceeding northbound on Greenwood Avenue at a speed of at least 62 mph. Koenigsberg drove his vehicle across the bridge, which is a 25-mph zone, then lost control of the vehicle

on a left curve following the bridge. The front passenger side of the car struck a guardrail, then continued partially in the northbound lane and partially on the grass for 142 feet where it struck two utility poles. The force of the vehicle's impact sheared off one of the poles near the base and broke the second pole in multiple places, leaving it suspended by its utility wires. The impact rotated Koenigsberg's car 180 degrees and came to rest in the southbound lane of Greenwood Avenue.

The investigation into the events leading up to the crash found that the occupants of the car had attended a birthday party from 8 to 10 p.m. on Saturday night at a bowling alley, where no alcohol was served. The investigation further found that the defendant and others had been exiting the party to drink alcohol in Koenigsberg's vehicle. Empty alcohol bottles were found in the car after the crash. A friend of Koenigsberg's reported to detectives that he had attempted to take the keys to Koenigsberg's vehicle a couple times that night to stop him from driving but had been unsuccessful.

A post-crash examination of the Honda Civic found no mechanical problems that could have contributed to the crash. It also found that the Honda had sustained heavy damage to the front of the vehicle, with extensive intrusion of 32 inches into the passenger compartment. The force of the impact partially separated the engine compartment from the passenger compartment at the firewall. The vehicle's airbags did deploy at the time of the crash.

The injuries to all occupants of the vehicle were extensive. The crash resulted in the death of Bednarek, who was seated unbelted on the passenger side of the backseat. A 17-year-old female, seated unbelted in the middle of the back seat, was sent head-first through the front windshield to her waist. She sustained a brain bleed, broken vertebrae, broken pelvis and other injuries. A female passenger seated behind the driver was wearing a seat belt and sustained a spinal injury, fractured ribs and internal injuries. The front-seat male passenger, who was wearing a seat belt, sustained a skull fracture, multiple broken vertebrae and extensive internal injuries that required the use of a ventilator.

Koenigsberg, who was wearing a seatbelt, sustained spinal injuries and a broken clavicle. Hospital testing of his blood during treatment showed a BAC estimated to be between .136% and .165% as well the presence of THC, the active ingredient in marijuana. A blood sample taken from Koenigsberg was submitted to National Medical Services, which found a BAC of .117% and significant THC metabolites.

Crash investigators determined that the cause of the crash was Koenigsberg's level of alcohol and drug impairment combined with the excessive speed and reckless operation of his vehicle. The manner Koenigsberg operated his vehicle directly led to the death of Bednarek and caused the severe injuries to the three other passengers in the car at the time of the crash.

"This young man turned his car into a lethal weapon and caused the crash that killed one passenger and injured three teenaged passengers so badly that they will be dealing with their injuries for a very long time," said Steele. "Many families were forever altered by this defendant's actions, and my heart goes out to all of them."

Koenigsberg was arrested and charged with Homicide by Vehicle DUI, Homicide by Vehicle, Aggravated Assault DUI, DUI and related charges. His arraignment is pending, at which time the preliminary hearing will be scheduled.

The case will be prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Gwendolyn Kull.

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.*