

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS – PLYMOUTH DISTRICT  
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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**NEWS RELEASE**  
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**MIDDLEBORO MAN PLEADS GUILTY, SENT TO JAIL FOR FATAL HIT AND RUN  
CRASH THAT CLAIMED THE LIFE OF A MIDDLEBORO FATHER**

**PLYMOUTH** – A Middleboro man who struck and killed a bicyclist and then fled the scene has been sentenced to serve two and a half years in the House of Corrections, with 18 months to serve, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced.

Eric Megna (DOB: 07-20-95) pleaded guilty today to one count of Leaving the Scene of a Death. Plymouth Superior Court Judge Christopher Muse sentenced Megna to serve 2 ½ years in the House of Corrections, with 18 months to serve and the balance suspended for two years. The conviction carries with it a three-year suspension of his license and Megna must perform 100 hours of community service and stay away and have no contact with the victim's family.

At approximately 7 pm on October 11, 2013, Megna was returning home from the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth where he was a student when he struck and killed 58-year-old Michael Dutra while he was riding his bike on Wood Street in Middleboro. Mr. Dutra suffered severe and fatal injuries and was pronounced dead at the scene.

Rather than stop and assist the dying Dutra, Megna instead fled the scene to New Hampshire to family-owned property. Megna spent several days there before he reported to New Hampshire State Police that he had struck a deer while driving home on Route 93. Megna emailed a picture of a dead deer to his mother, who showed it to investigators.

State Police Detectives assigned to the District Attorney's Office, Middleboro Police Department and several other State Police Units and agencies, embarked on an intense investigation into the crash. Police determined that the deer photograph Megna had emailed was taken from the internet and they found no signs of fur or other deer remains on his black Jeep Grand Cherokee.

The Massachusetts State Police Criminalistics Section sent paint chips found at the scene and on Dutra's clothing to a lab in Calgary to determine the manufacturer that used that particular paint and the make of the vehicle, which came back to match Megna's vehicle.

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In the days after the fatal crash, police connected jagged pieces recovered at the scene to the distinct shape and jagged edges of parts recovered from a Quincy auto body shop where Megna's vehicle was repaired. State Police also recovered DNA from the Jeep's shattered windshield, which was later analyzed by the State Police DNA Unit as a match to the victim.

Additionally, cell phone records identified Megna's phone as one that was pinging towers in the Middleboro area at the time of the crash.

State Police arrested Megna approximately 40 days after the crash.

"This defendant did not hit an animal or debris in the road, he struck and killed Michael Dutra, the loving father of two daughters," DA Cruz said. "He left Mr. Dutra to die alone in the roadway and then concocted a scheme that was both cowardly and criminal. With Mr. Megna now in jail, I am hopeful the Dutra family can finally take steps to begin to heal."

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Russell Eonas and Richard Linehan and was investigated by State Police Detectives assigned to the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office, the Middleboro Police Department, the State Police CARS Section, the State Police Trace Analysis Unit, the State Police Crime Scene Services Section, the State Police DNA Unit, the State Police Criminalistics Section, the Plymouth County Sheriff's HEAT Unit and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

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