



Office of the Washington County Attorney

Kevin Magnuson, County Attorney

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: March 20, 2025

Man sentenced in Forest Lake murder that killed teen girl

STILLWATER, Minn. – A North Branch man convicted of second-degree felony murder for killing a 17-year-old girl was sentenced today to over 19 years in prison, Washington County Attorney Kevin Magnuson announced.

Following a five-day trial in December, a Washington County jury convicted 21-year-old Dylan Robert Simmons of second-degree felony murder, criminal vehicular homicide, and three counts of second-degree assault with a dangerous weapon for driving his vehicle into a crowd at Lakeside Memorial Park in Forest Lake, running over and killing 17-year-old Darisha Bailey Vath. He was found not guilty of the charge of second-degree intentional murder.

On Thursday, Judge Siv Mjanger handed down a sentence of 234 months in prison for the second-degree murder charge and 25, 32, and 46 months on the three counts of second-degree assault. Each sentence was ordered to be served concurrently, with credit for 614 days served. Judge Mjanger did not impose a sentence on the criminal vehicular homicide charge because it encompasses the same conduct as the second-degree murder charge. Judge Mjanger also ordered Simmons to pay a \$500 fine and left the issue of restitution open for 90 days.

According to the criminal complaint, Forest Lake police responded to a report of a pedestrian struck by a vehicle at approximately 1:22 a.m. on July 16, 2023. Upon arrival, officers found a bystander performing chest compressions on Bailey Vath in the parking lot. Despite emergency medical efforts, Bailey Vath was pronounced dead at the scene.

Officers interviewed witnesses and learned that the incident followed a confrontation between two groups, most of whom knew each other and were armed with weapons such as baseball bats, hammers, and knives. After the altercation de-escalated, Simmons got behind the wheel of his white Mazda sedan with a passenger. Witnesses reported that Simmons intentionally drove toward several people from the opposing group, narrowly missing three bystanders, before circling around and accelerating toward the crowd again and striking the rear end of a parked vehicle. He then reversed and again drove toward the group, this time hitting Bailey Vath with the front passenger side of his car.



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The incident was captured on video from multiple angles, including cell phone and surveillance video, which showed Simmons' vehicle driving up and over Bailey Vath before speeding away from the scene. Simmons eventually returned after his passenger placed a phone call to a witness at the scene. The witness gave his phone to a police sergeant who directed Simmons and his passenger to return. Simmons later admitted to driving the vehicle that struck Bailey Vath and acknowledged that he knew he had run her over. An autopsy by the Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office confirmed that Bailey Vath died from traumatic head injuries.

"Darisha Bailey Vath's young life was cut tragically short as the result of this murder," said Magnuson. "Though no sentence can bring Darisha back to her family, we are grateful that this case has concluded with justice for Darisha, her family, and the community."

Simmons remains in custody at the Washington County Jail awaiting transfer to the Minnesota Department of Corrections. Assistant County Attorneys Marc Berris and Kayla Wengronowitz prosecuted the case.