



BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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PRESS RELEASE

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CHICO YOUTH SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR VEHICULAR MANSLAUGHTER

A 20-year-old Chico man was sentenced to three years in state prison this afternoon for killing a 26-year-old man in a vehicle versus motorcycle collision last year in downtown Chico as well as for beating a man in the Butte County Jail.

Pesiaune Finau, 20, was previously convicted in Butte County Superior Court of felony counts of vehicular manslaughter and battery with serious bodily injury.

The courtroom gallery was filled with supporters and loved ones of the 26-year-old victim, Hunter Dixon. Hunter's mother and father fought through tears when speaking to the judge and urging justice for their beloved son.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey said the vehicular manslaughter charge resulted from an incident on September 26, 2021, when the Chico Police received reports of a collision at the intersection of 8th Street and Main Street in downtown Chico.

It was a clear and dry afternoon when Finau was driving a SUV westbound on E. 8th Street at 76 mph in a 35-mph zone and ran a red light at Main Street. He struck 26-year-old Hunter Dixon, who was riding through that intersection on his motorcycle on the green light.

The investigation showed that after Finau struck Dixon at 63 mph, he veered to the right and into a building at 120 W. 8th Street. The building sustained major structural damage and had to be braced for safety by the Chico Fire Department. Finau did not have a driver's license and had been recently ticketed for the lack of a license. Dixon was pronounced dead soon after at the hospital.

While the manslaughter case was pending with Finau in jail, he beat a fellow inmate ripping a gaping hole in the corner of the inmate's mouth, and he was subsequently charged with battery with serious bodily injury.

Ramsey noted the judge was limited to a lower term prison sentence of three years due to a recent change in the law by the California state legislature mandating lower term sentencing for those offenders under 26 years of age.

The judge also ordered Finau to be responsible for restitution for the burial expenses of Dixon and the expected \$50,000 in repairs to the building Finau damaged.



Pesiaune Finau