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"Inclusion Through Diversity"

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PRESS RELEASE / FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Garaus A. Henry, 27, of Lansing, appeared in Tompkins County Court on Thursday morning, February 24, 2022, and entered a guilty plea to the crimes of Manslaughter in the Second Degree, a Class C Felony and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, a Class C Violent Felony. The case had been scheduled for jury selection starting that morning.

The maximum possible sentence for the Manslaughter conviction is an indeterminate term of five to fifteen years in New York State prison.

An indeterminate sentence means that the defendant is sentenced to a range with a minimum and maximum amount of time in prison. For example, if a defendant is sentenced to a term of five to fifteen years, he must serve at least five years before being eligible for parole and the remainder of the sentence would be served on parole. A defendant is not guaranteed to be released on parole after five years and could serve up to ten years before being released on parole for the remainder of the sentence.

In this case, as a condition of the plea, Garaus Henry will be sentenced to the maximum term of five to fifteen years in state prison for the Manslaughter conviction and a concurrent term of three and a half years in prison for the Criminal Possession of a Weapon conviction.

Henry admitted to firing an illegal handgun on March 13, 2021, during an exchange of gunfire and high-speed chase through the Town of Lansing, which ended in the two vehicles being completely demolished. Sha-heem Harris, 21, of Elmira, died from multiple blunt force trauma suffered during the automobile accident.

Van Houten said, "The death of Sha-heem Harris was tragic and senseless. The acceptance of responsibility by the defendant is significant, as are the associated consequences. The conduct of everyone involved in this conflict, especially Garaus Henry, was reckless and unacceptable in our community. Unfortunately, a young man lost his life in the course of this completely avoidable incident."

District Attorney Van Houten prosecuted the case and Ralph Franco, of Brooklyn, New York, represented the defendant.

Sentencing has been scheduled for June 24, 2022, before County Court Judge John C. Rowley.
