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PRESS RELEASE

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**Third-Year Law Student Convicted of Murder
for Head-on DUI Collision that Killed Driver**
***34-year-old who discussed prior conviction involving drinking and driving
in his law school application had a blood alcohol content
of nearly four times the legal limit in deadly Yorba Linda crash***

SANTA ANA, Calif. – A third-year law student who had been previously convicted of aggravated assault involving an accident he caused after drinking and driving in Arizona was found guilty Monday of murdering a 41-year-old man in a head-on collision in August 2017 while driving with a blood-alcohol content of nearly four times the legal limit.

A jury convicted Richard Lindwall III, 34, of Yorba Linda today of one count of second-degree murder. He faces a maximum sentence of 30 years to life, plus an additional five years in state prison. Sentencing is scheduled for June 21, 2024 in Department C45 of the Central Justice Center in Santa Ana.

On August 3, 2017, Lindwall was driving to his home in Yorba Linda at night when he sped around a curve, traveling more than 90 miles per hour on La Palma Avenue and crashed into a car driven

by Carlos Mendez. The force of the collision pushed the vehicle off of its front axle and the car became detached from the engine.

Lindwall's vehicle cut across all lanes of opposing traffic and came to rest a few hundred feet from where the crash occurred. Arriving paramedics and firefighters found broken beer bottles on the floorboard of Lindwall's vehicle. His blood alcohol content was nearly four times the legal limit and further tests reveal he had two types of prescription drugs in his blood as well.

Lindwall was previously convicted in Maricopa County, Arizona, for a 2011 crash in which he was driving over 80 miles per hour after drinking and struck a curb that send his sports car flying through the air until it struck a boulder. His girlfriend, who was a passenger in the car, suffered severe injuries to her head and body. He was sentenced to one year in jail.

Lindwall applied to the Pepperdine University School of Law and had to disclose his conviction in Arizona. In his admissions paperwork, he spoke about how he seriously injured his girlfriend while driving after drinking. He was eventually admitted to the law school and was finishing his final year when he killed Mendez.

"A law student who used his prior drinking and driving as part of his application to get accepted into law school is now a convicted murder," said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. "This was a tragedy that never had to happen and instead of practicing law Richard Lindwall will be spending years behind bars because he refused to learn his lesson that drinking and driving is dangerous. Actions speak louder than words and in this case Lindwall's actions resulted in the death of an innocent man just leaving work."

Deputy District Attorney Devin Campbell of the Homicide Unit is prosecuting this case.