

MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTOR SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

Contact: April Wiesner
(330) 643-8386

Five Years in Prison for Richfield Vehicular Assault, OVI

(July 27, 2012... Akron) ... Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that late yesterday Judge Tammy O'Brien sentenced James R. Klein, III, 29, of West Streetsboro Road in Richfield, to five years in prison for a drunk-driving crash in Richfield last August. Judge O'Brien also suspended Klein's license for 15 years.

After a night of drinking at the Clearview in Richfield with his girlfriend, Klein took his girlfriend's car keys and decided to drive himself home. His girlfriend didn't want to be stranded at the bar, so she jumped into the car before Klein drove away. Klein ran a stop sign and crashed into a dead-end embankment, flipping the car. Klein had to be cut out of the car. His girlfriend, who was found by EMS outside the car, suffered serious injuries that required hospitalization and extensive therapy.

"This is a prime example of the dangers of drinking and driving, and Mr. Klein is very fortunate that no one was killed," said Prosecutor Walsh. "This is Mr. Klein's fourth OVI within the past six years. I am absolutely disgusted that he would continue to get behind the wheel after drinking, particularly after having already been convicted of multiple drunk-driving offenses."

On June 27, a jury found Klein guilty of Aggravated Vehicular Assault, a felony of the second degree; two counts of Operating Under the Influence, a felony of the fourth degree; and Driving Under Suspension, a misdemeanor of the first degree.