

Navajo woman pleads guilty to involuntary manslaughter charge

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ALBUQUERQUE – Bryana Agnes Henio, 30, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation who resides in Little Water, N.M., pled guilty on Nov. 20 in federal court in Albuquerque, N.M., to an involuntary manslaughter charge under a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Henio was arrested in October, on a criminal complaint charging her with involuntary manslaughter. According to the complaint, Henio killed a man by hitting him with a vehicle on Sept. 8, on the Navajo Indian Reservation in McKinley County. At the time Henio ran over the victim, Henio was driving under the influence of alcohol.

During the Nov. 20 proceedings, Henio pled guilty to felony information charging her with involuntary manslaughter and admitted to killing the victim by driving recklessly while under the influence of alcohol. Henio acknowledged that the alcohol rendered her incapable of exercising clear judgment and a steady hand in operating the vehicle.

At sentencing, Henio faces a maximum statutory penalty of eight years in federal prison. She remains in custody pending a sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

This case was investigated by the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety. Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph M. Spindle is prosecuting the case.