

Tuba City man sentenced to prison for involuntary manslaughter

Written by Staff Reports

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PHOENIX – Brennan Lee Sumatzkuku, 23, of Tuba City, Ariz., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Douglas L. Rayes to 36 months in federal prison Dec. 5, followed by three years of supervised release. Sumatzkuku had previously pleaded guilty to one count of involuntary manslaughter.

On Jan. 22, Sumatzkuku, an enrolled member of the Hopi Nation, was driving a vehicle with two passengers on the Navajo Nation reservation. In dark and snowy conditions, Sumatzkuku, whose blood alcohol content was later determined to be .188, drove at a high rate of speed and lost control of the vehicle, causing all three occupants to be ejected.

One victim, 29, an enrolled member of the Hopi Nation, was pronounced dead at the scene, and another victim, 20, also an enrolled member of the Hopi Nation, was seriously injured.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Navajo Nation Department of Criminal Investigations. The prosecution was handled by Christina Covault, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.