

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****CONTACT:**

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Chain | Cohn | Stiles files lawsuit on behalf of family of Tehachapi teenager killed in DUI hit-and-run

Occupants of truck facing no charges despite admitting DUI hit-and-run crash that killed 15-year-old Leslie Balderrama

Bakersfield, Calif. – Leslie Elaine Balderrama was a freshman at Tehachapi High School who excelled in school and out of school, including on the basketball court and through various volunteer endeavors. Add her contagious smile and bright personality, and Leslie was in a league of her own, her family says.

On Oct. 10, 2015, Leslie was walking home from a friend’s house when she was suddenly struck by a pickup truck on the dirt right shoulder of State Route 202. She eventually succumbed to her injuries, just 15 days shy of her 15th birthday.

The occupants of the truck – Issac Macias, 20, and passenger Ibrahim Essa Gomes, 19 – fled the scene of the crash without calling the police or summoning medical help. Both Macias and Gomes were under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crash. After the pickup collided with Leslie, Gomes got out of the pickup and looked at her, telling CHP officers later that “she didn’t look like she got that messed up,” despite her not moving. Macias never got out of the pickup.

Despite driving under the influence of alcohol, killing Balderrama, and fleeing the scene, Macias to this date has not been charged with a crime. Gomes, too, has not been charged.

On Wednesday, Chain | Cohn | Stiles will file a wrongful death lawsuit on behalf of Leslie’s mother, Evelyn Denise Natividad, against Macias and Gomes, as well as Exelon Generation Company, LLC and First Solar, Inc., who employed Macias at the time of the collision and entrusted him with the pickup.

Attorneys Matthew Clark and Neil Gehlawat from Chain | Cohn | Stiles – accompanied by Leslie’s mother – will host a press conference to discuss the filing of the lawsuit. Copies of the lawsuit, as well as photographs of Leslie, will be available.

When: 9:30 a.m. Wednesday (Feb. 17, 2016)

Where: Chain | Cohn | Stiles, 1731 Chester Avenue in downtown Bakersfield

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CHAIN | COHN | STILES is Kern County’s leading plaintiffs’ personal injury law firm, voted Bakersfield’s “Best Law Firm” in The Bakersfield Californian’s Readers’ Choice Poll the last three years straight. Our Bakersfield personal injury and workers’ compensation attorneys have represented clients from throughout the San Joaquin Valley and California for more than 80 years. We concentrate our efforts on protecting the rights of individuals who have been seriously injured due to the negligent, reckless or intentional conduct of another. If you have been injured due to the fault of another, you have the right to hold that person or entity accountable, no matter how rich or powerful that person or entity may be. At Chain | Cohn | Stiles, we pride ourselves on having the reputation and resources necessary to overcome the most difficult challenges while achieving the best possible results for our clients. For more information, go to chainlaw.com, and visit our blog to stay up to date on firm news: bloggingforjustice.com.

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