

in Memoriam

Juvenile Correctional Counselor

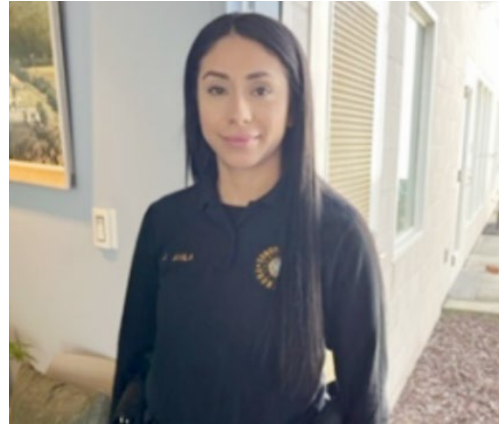
Jessica Avila Munoz

Department

Sonoma County

End of Watch

August 16, 2024



SANTA ROSA, Calif. (KGO) -- In the North Bay, Sonoma County's law enforcement community is mourning one of their own. Jessica Avila Munoz was a juvenile correctional counselor. She was off duty Friday, driving to pick her daughter up at school when she was killed by a suspected drunk driver, who had four previous DUI arrests.

"It was a gut punch, something that will be with us the rest of our careers," said Chief Probation Officer, Vanessa Fuchs

Fuchs says her staff at Sonoma County Juvenile Hall is mourning the death of correctional counselor, 31-year-old Jessica Avila Munoz.

On Friday, Munoz was headed to pick up her 13-year-old daughter at school in Santa Rosa when a suspected drunk driver struck and killed her. Munoz was just beginning her career at Juvenile hall, sworn in last October and thrilled to be a part of the team.

"She was enthusiastic about working, very happy and proud to be a juvenile correctional counselor," said Fuchs.

The facility's break room is filled with flowers and cards remembering Jessica.

"She was very excited to work here, had compassion for the residents," said Juvenile Correctional Counselor, Trevor Vannetti.

Vannetti was Jessica's friend and co-worker, he says there's only one thing she loved more than doing her job.

"She loved her daughter more than anything, it was her number one priority, the department will do anything to assist her with what she needs," he added.

Sonoma County Superior Court records show the 68-year-old suspect has at least four prior misdemeanor convictions for driving under the influence, dating back to 1987. Police he was driving illegally on a suspended license.

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"Anyone who's impaired with alcohol or drugs should never be behind the wheel, especially when you have already, previously been arrested," said Santa Rosa Police Sergeant Patricia Steffens.

"It's my understanding Jessica and her sister moved into a a new place on the first and hadn't even unpacked the boxes," said Damian Evans, President of Sonoma County Law Enforcement Association.

The association has launched an online fundraiser to support Jessica's family.

<https://porac.org/fundraiser/sonomacounty-jessicaavilamunoz/>

While law enforcement across the region copes with the loss of an up-and-coming officer, gone too soon.

"I just want to focus on Jessica, telling her story and focus on supporting her family during this challenging time," said Fuchs.