

State of South Carolina
Solicitor, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit

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PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

June 21, 2011

Blue Ridge Teen Pleads Guilty to Reckless Homicide

Thirteenth Circuit Solicitor Walt Wilkins states that RONALD D. NIELSEN, age 18, plead guilty on Monday, June 20, 2011 to Reckless Homicide and was sentenced by the Honorable Rob Stilwell to five years incarceration suspended upon the service of ninety days in the Greenville County Detention Center, followed by one year of Home Incarceration. NIELSEN will be on probation for three years following the completion of his confinement and home incarceration sentence.

Evidence presented by Assistant Solicitor Katryna Bevis Salisbury at the plea hearing established that on March 22, 2010, just after 8:30 p.m., officers with the South Carolina Highway Patrol responded to a reported single car collision on Ridge Road near Greer in Greenville County. Officers observed NIELSEN at the scene of the accident, and he admitted being the driver of the wrecked vehicle. Nearby, officers located the victim, Joshua Bryant, who had been ejected from the vehicle during the crash. Bryant was pronounced deceased on scene. Through the course of their investigation, law enforcement officers determined that NIELSEN had been traveling at an excessive rate of speed before losing control of the vehicle. NIELSEN also described to law enforcement officers and EMS personnel that he was traveling in excess of 100 mph in a posted 35 mph zone when he lost control of the vehicle, and ran off the right side of the roadway striking a tree. Bryant was a student at Blue Ridge High School at the time of the collision.