

# ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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**Theodore F. L. Housel**

**Prosecutor**

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## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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**MAYS LANDING** – A Cumberland County woman charged with the drunk-driving crash that left her boyfriend dead entered a guilty plea on Thursday to aggravated manslaughter and faces up to 10 years in prison when sentenced in April, Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel stated today.

Aimee Jost, 32, of Vineland, must serve 85 percent of the prison term imposed before being eligible for parole for causing the death of Nicholas Smith, 29, of Vineland. In accordance with the plea agreement, the defendant will be sentenced in the second-degree range, Prosecutor Housel stated.

During the plea hearing Jost acknowledged that she acted recklessly when she drove drunk. She also stated that she showed an indifference to the value of human life. Jost and Smith began drinking at a bar on May 13, 2008, and continued into the early morning hours of May 14, 2008. She and Smith headed north on Brewster Road in Buena Borough at 2:10 a.m., when the vehicle left the roadway. The car struck several road signs and crossed back over Brewster Road, struck a fence post, rolled over and eventually came to a final rest on its roof. Smith, who was in the passenger side, was ejected from the car. He was pronounced dead at the scene, Prosecutor Housel said.

Authorities determined that at the time of the crash Jost was traveling 76.9 miles per hour in a 45-mile-per-hour zone. It was also determined that her blood alcohol content at the time of the crash was between a .21 to a .24 percent. The legal limit is a .08, according to Assistant Prosecutor Curt Baker.

In addition to entering a guilty plea for aggravated manslaughter, Jost pled guilty to driving while intoxicated and could face up to 90 days in Atlantic County Justice Facility. However, the term would run concurrent to the State Prison term. Upon release from prison, Jost's license will be suspended for up to five years, Baker said.

The day of the crash Jost was issued traffic tickets, including careless driving, failure to maintain a lane, reckless driving and drunk driving. On July 10, 2008, the Prosecutor's Office charged her with aggravated manslaughter. An Atlantic County Grand Jury indicted Jost in April of 2009.

Superior Court Judge Albert Garofolo presided over the case and will sentence Jost on April 1.

**Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor's Office Web site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS) or visit the Crime Stoppers Website at <http://www.crimestoppersatlantic.com/>. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.**