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Parents of hit-and-run victim sue

Family's lawsuit is against firefighter, his wife and county for wrongful death

by Chris Loos
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The parents of a Hilo man killed in a hit-and run-accident in August have filed a wrongful death lawsuit against a firefighter, his wife and the county.

The lawsuit, filed Tuesday in Circuit Court by Waimea attorney Jerry Hiatt, alleges that Konrad K. Mossman struck and killed 22-year-old Dale Kanani Tim Sing while driving his pickup truck home drunk from a gathering of Hawaii County Fire Department employees.

Mossman, a fire equipment operator for the Laupahoehoe fire station, declined to discuss the allegations. "I cannot say anything about this case. But that's the first I'm hearing of this whole thing," he said Tuesday afternoon.

Fire Chief Darryl Oliveira also had not seen the lawsuit. He said he was unaware of any Fire Department function the night of Aug. 4.

"We don't have any sanctioned event that took place on the evening of that night," Oliveira said. "What we do show is that we had a haz-mat tech class in which Mr. Mossman was a student and that was on July 25 till Aug. 5 from 8 o'clock to 1700 daily."

The lawsuit alleges that at 7 a.m. Aug. 5, Mossman called police and reported that his wife, Huihui Lavon Hanahoe-Mossman, had been driving their pickup truck the night before and "struck something."

Two hours later police found Tim Sing's body on the Puna side of Kahaopea Road in the Panaewa area of Hilo. Tim Sing was pronounced dead at Hilo Medical Center.

According to the lawsuit, the boy was hit from behind and pickup truck had "extensive damage" on the front passenger side.

The lawsuit alleges that someone "apparently with training as a paramedic or emergency responder" attempted to revive Tim Sing soon after the accident.

It alleges that the Mossmans "conspired with each other" and with county employees to cover up their role in the accident and its aftermath.

According to the lawsuit, even if Hanahoe-Mossman really was the driver, she was under the influence of alcohol at the time.

The complaint alleges that police failed to properly investigate the accident by not immediately impounding the Mossmans' truck and by delaying in securing the accident scene or thoroughly searching it. That alleged delay caused police to miss evidence, including pieces of the truck that broke off during the crash. Police also failed to gather evidence from Tim Sing's body and delayed in their follow-up investigation, the complaint alleges.

Police Chief Lawrence Mahuna said state law prohibits him from commenting about the allegations because the case is still under investigation.

According to the lawsuit, the county is liable to Tim Sing's parents, Dale Cordero and Kale Tim Sing, and to his siblings, Kale and Lokelani Tim Sing, for financial loss as well as compensation for emotional distress and mental anguish.

The family also is seeking punitive damages.

Corporation Counsel Lincoln Ashida, who represents the county in lawsuits, said he was unfamiliar with the allegations in this one. "I haven't seen it," he said, "but when we do -- like any other case that the county has -- we'll make sure it's properly investigated."