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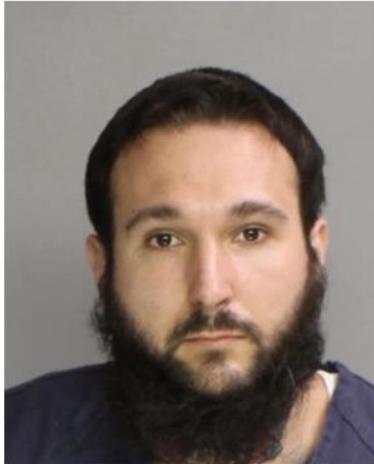
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **TWO MEN ARRESTED FOR DRUG DELIVERY RESULTING IN DEATH IN CASE OF BODY DROPPED OFF AT POTTSTOWN HOSPITAL**



**JOSHUA BENNER**



**RONALD SHOCK**

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (Jan. 21, 2021) — Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele and Pottstown Police Chief Mick Markovich announce the arrests of Joshua Benner, 28, of Telford, Pa., and Ronald Shock, 35, of Boyertown, Pa., for Drug Delivery Resulting in Death related to the May 7, 2020 overdose death of 35-year-old Ramon Morales, who was found deceased on the grass outside of Pottstown Hospital.

At 2:45 a.m., on May 7, 2020, Pottstown Police responded to Pottstown Hospital for a report of an unresponsive male found outside of the hospital. The male was found by hospital staff lying on a grassy area between the Emergency Room entrance and the parking lot. The victim had no identification, cellphone or car keys on his person and his clothes were soaking wet, despite the fact that it was not raining and had not rained recently. The male, later identified as Morales, was unable to be revived and was pronounced dead. The Montgomery County Coroner's Office conducted an autopsy on the body, which determined that Morales died of combined drug intoxication of fentanyl and cocaine.

Pottstown Police and Montgomery County Detectives opened a joint investigation into the death. A review of hospital video surveillance showed that at 2:22 a.m., a dark-colored hatchback vehicle was in the hospital parking lot, later identified as the Dodge Caliber registered to Benner. Two days later on May 9, 2020, Morales was identified when a friend reported him missing to the Douglass Township Police. Douglass Township Police located Morales' work van parked outside of Shock's apartment, and in the same parking lot was Benner's Dodge Caliber.

Through multiple interviews, audio recordings and cell phone records, the investigation found that Benner traveled with a friend to Philadelphia to buy cocaine and heroin/fentanyl (stamped "FLINTSTONES") on May 6, 2020. That evening, he sold some of those same drugs to Shock and the victim, and they all consumed them at approximately 11 p.m. at Shock's apartment. From approximately 11:30 p.m. when Morales overdosed until 2:22 a.m. on May 7 when the car was seen on hospital surveillance, the defendants did not call 911 or seek medical help, despite discussing the fact that Morales was overdosing. The investigation further revealed that while the victim was overdosing, the defendants tried to "wake him up" by putting him in the shower, cleaned Shock's apartment to eliminate evidence, fabricated and rehearsed their story about what happened, discussed going to jail and disposed of the victim's car keys, cellphone and wallet.

A search warrant for Benner's car found multiple baggies of heroin/fentanyl, including some labeled "FLINTSTONES," cocaine and other illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia. The search also found a wet T-shirt in the car.

"Instead of calling 911 to summon medical help for someone who they knew was overdosing, these defendants waited approximately three hours before dumping his body outside of a hospital after it was too late for anyone to help Mr. Morales," said DA Steele. "Ramon Morales died from these deadly drugs that were sold to him by a dealer and then their casual disregard for his life caused him to suffer and die right in front of these two defendants while they did nothing. We will seek justice for Mr. Morales."

Shock was charged with Drug Delivery Resulting in Death, Conspiracy, Possession with Intent to Deliver, Recklessly Endangering Another Person and related charges. He was arraigned before Magisterial District Judge Edward C. Kropp Sr., who set bail at \$250,000 cash. Shock was unable to make bail and was remanded to the Montgomery County Correctional Facility. A preliminary hearing was set for 8 a.m., Jan. 27, 2021, before Judge Kropp.

Benner was charged with Drug Delivery Resulting in Death, Conspiracy, Possession with Intent to Deliver, Recklessly Endangering Another Person and related charges. Benner, incarcerated at Montgomery County Correctional Facility on an unrelated charge, was video arraigned before Magisterial District Judge Edward C. Kropp Sr., who set bail at \$99,000 cash. A preliminary hearing was set for 8:45 a.m., Jan. 27, 2021, before Judge Kropp.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Lauren Marvel, Captain of the Pottstown Community Justice Unit, and Assistant District Attorney Lindsey Mills, who is assigned to the Narcotics Unit.

Approved for release:

Kevin R. Steele

*CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.*