



Borough of State College
"A Home Rule Municipality"



STATE COLLEGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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JOHN F. GARDNER
Chief of Police

MEDIA RELEASE November 12, 2021 Missing Person **21SC18062**

The State College Police Department would like to express our deepest condolences to the family and friends of a 19-year-old Penn State student reported missing the evening of November 11, 2021. She was last seen the evening of November 10th and her body was located on November 12th. Currently State College Police and the Centre County Coroner's Office are investigating the circumstances surrounding her death.

Preliminary information available to investigators indicates the death to be accidental in nature. No further information is available for release at this time and will be provided as possible in the future.

UPDATE – November 19, 2021

State College Police and the Centre County Coroner's Office continue to investigate the death of Justine Gross. Eyewitness, video, and forensic evidence is being used to investigate this case. The investigation is still ongoing. All witnesses are still fully cooperating with police. Police can confirm that Gross died as a result of a fall inside an 11th floor solid waste disposal chute at 456 E. Beaver Avenue, into a waste receptacle on the ground floor which occurred around 11:30pm on November 10, 2021. Video evidence suggests she was alone in the 11th floor hallway and in the waste disposal room when she fell. Prior to her being found, the waste receptacle was emptied by a Borough of State College refuse truck. State College Police were notified of her disappearance at 5:15pm on November 11. Her body was located by State College Police officers at the Centre County Recycling & Refuse Authority transfer station in College Township at 2:45am on November 12. The Centre County Coroner's office was contacted and began their investigation. The Centre County Coroner's Office will determine the cause of death pending final lab testing results and information obtained throughout this ongoing investigation. At this point the incident still appears to be accidental in nature.

UPDATE – February 17, 2022

The Centre County Coroner reports that the manner of death in this case is "accident". The cause of death is reported as "multiple acute blunt force trauma, due to a fall". Toxicology results were obtained from liver tissue. The analysis detected Delta-9 Carboxy THC (marijuana) and an elevated level of ethanol (alcohol). At this time, no new information has been obtained by State College Police or the Centre County Coroner's Office to indicate that this death is criminal in nature. Justine Gross' injuries and manner of death are consistent with a fall from the 11th floor of her apartment building. Absent any new information or evidence, The State College Police Department is concluding our investigation into this matter. Our condolences to the family and friends of Ms. Gross and we hope the community can continue to respect their grieving process.