



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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Colorado's 4th Judicial District - Serving El Paso & Teller Counties

Man Sentenced to 224 Years in Prison for Murder of UCCS Professor

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COLORADO SPRINGS – On Wednesday, May 6, 2026, the man convicted for the murder of 54-year-old Haleh Abghari, a professor at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, was sentenced to 224 years in the Department of Corrections.

In August of 2024, 54-year-old Ceasar Wilson entered Ms. Abghari's home through an open garage door, with the intent to steal items inside. Inside, he encountered Ms. Abghari, and the two struggled before the defendant stabbed Ms. Abghari multiple times, stole her car, and drove off.

Seven months after Ms. Abghari's murder, law enforcement officers tracked the defendant to another state, where he was being held under a different name on unrelated charges.

The defendant was extradited back Colorado to be tried for his crimes in El Paso County, and in February of this year, a jury found him guilty on all counts related to Ms. Abghari's death:

- Murder in the Second Degree (Knowingly), CRS 18-3-103(1)(a), a Class 2 Felony
- Crime of Violence Sentence Enhancers, CRS 18-1.3-406
- Murder in the Second Degree (Felony Murder), CRS 18-3-103(1)(b), a Class 2 Felony
- Crime of Violence Sentence Enhancers
- Aggravated Robbery, CRS 18-4-302(1)(b), a Class 3 Felony
- Crime of Violence Sentence Enhancers



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- Motor Vehicle Theft in the Second Degree, CRS 18-4-409(3), a Class 4 Felony
- Identity Theft, CRS 18-5-902(1)(a), a Class 4 Felony
- Theft, CRS 18-4-401(1),(2)(b), a Petty Offense

The jury further found the defendant to be a Habitual Criminal based on 14 prior felony convictions counts involving felony convictions in North Carolina between 1991 and 1994.

In Colorado, habitual offenders face more lengthy mandatory prison sentences as provided by CRS 18-1.3-801, which reads:

...every person convicted in this state of any felony, who has been three times previously convicted, upon charges separately brought and tried, and arising out of separate and distinct criminal episodes, either in this state or elsewhere, of a felony or, under the laws of any other state, the United States, or any territory subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, of a crime which, if committed within this state, would be a felony, shall be adjudged an habitual criminal and shall be punished:

*(A) For the felony offense of which such person is convicted by imprisonment in the department of corrections for a term of **four times the maximum of the presumptive range** pursuant to section 18-1.3-401 for the class or level of felony of which such person is convicted.*

“The violence perpetrated by the defendant against Haleh Abghari, an innocent woman alone in her own home, deserved the harsh sentence issued today in court. Ms. Abghari’s death was a devastating loss for her family, the UCCS Community she helped shape for over a decade, and the entire 4th Judicial District,” said District Attorney Michael J. Allen. “We are grateful to see a just outcome in this case, and to our partners at the Colorado Springs Police Department and the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs for seeing this process through, from start to end. I also appreciate the hard work of the trial team that fought for justice, and the jurors who listened to difficult evidence and delivered guilty verdicts on all charges.”

Note to the Media: All updates will only come from Communications when available.

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