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**BLITCHINGTON FOUND GUILTY OF DUI MANSLAUGHTER THAT  
KILLED 3 IN NASSAU COUNTY**

State Attorney Melissa Nelson today announces that Shawn Blitchington, of Nassau County, was found guilty by a jury of three counts of DUI Manslaughter, Leaving the Scene of a Crash Involving Death, and Driving on a Permanently Revoked Driver's License. Blitchington now faces up to life in Florida State Prison. The Honorable James Daniel will sentence Blitchington during a July 7, 2021, hearing.

Just after 11 p.m. July 21, 2018, Blitchington drove his Ford F-250 south in a northbound lane of U.S. 301 in Bryceville when he caused a head-on crash with a Honda Civic. Ryan Kennedy, Bailey McKnight, and their unborn son were the occupants of the Civic — all three were killed in the crash. Witnesses attempted to detain Blitchington, who fled on foot. Deputies with the Nassau County Sheriff's Office located Blitchington nearby in the grass not far from the fatal crash after he hid for five hours. Responding law enforcement noted Blitchington, who denied being the driver of the truck, had a strong odor of alcohol and bloodshot and watery eyes. He was transported to UF Health Jacksonville and subsequently arrested. Blitchington was previously convicted of several driving offenses, including DUIs, and was ineligible to drive due a permanently revoked driver's license.

The case was investigated by the Florida Highway Patrol and Nassau County Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Donna Thurson and Beverly Collins.