

*[Statement by Renee Deangelis at Joseph Colon's plea hearing, before Circuit Judge Terence Perkins, as provided to FlaglerLive, Aug. 31, 2020]*

Good afternoon your Honor,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the courtroom. As everyone who is present today knows we are here because of a devastating family tragedy when we lost our precious daughter Savannah to a drug overdose. Nonetheless as we moved on through that journey God put many caring and determined people in our path. We would like to thank these people now.

Thank you - To the first responders and deputies who were the first on the scene for your diligence and kindness at the same time.

Thank you - To Sheriff Staly for creating a professional and compassionate department, we have such respect for all of you. Also thank you for allowing what was needed in your department to take this case to the next level.

Thank you - To Detective Nicole Quintieri for your persistence and tenacity in getting this case to the next level. Underneath that uniform is an angel who was much needed.

Thank you - To our advocate Knoeidia for keeping us informed and being so kind.

Thank you - To our state attorney's office - RJ Larizza state attorney and Jennifer Dunton assistant state attorney - thank you for your tireless work in getting this case to the forefront and accomplishing something that has been unprecedented in Flagler County and the Seventh Circuit - a murder conviction for a drug dealer - there is Justice! As a parent, grandparent and member of the Flagler County Community I have been witness to the drug problem we have in this county and how insidious it is, as it is everywhere in our nation. For the past two years I've chosen to join in the crusade to control and hopefully one day end this problem. I am the Chairperson for the Education and Prevention Committee on the Flagler Countywide Opioid Task Force as well as the newly formed Flagler Open Arms Recovery Services. There is so much work to be done in so many ways. With this case and sentencing you all have taken us one step closer to eradicating this heartbreaking problem. Drug dealing is not a career or a livelihood so pay attention dealers - this will never be tolerated in this county and you will be stopped. This ground breaking accomplishment will serve as an example in the future to drug dealers to consider their actions here in Flagler County as they will be next should they make the wrong move. Our family thanks you from the bottom of our hearts for making that message extremely clear.

Also ironically today - yearly on August 31st - is International Overdose Awareness Day - a day where we remember those we've lost to overdose.

In closing I'd like to say - Mr.Colon - Your children are in our prayers.

Thank you all.