

## Addy Hatch

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**From:** Thomas Clouse  
**Sent:** Friday, August 26, 2011 1:44 PM  
**To:** Addy Hatch  
**Subject:** FW: Press Release  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg

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**From:** Laurie Lewis [mailto:llewis@ci.moscow.id.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 26, 2011 1:12 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Press Release

## CITY OF MOSCOW

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# PRESS RELEASE

## HOMICIDE

**August 26, 2011 (Moscow, Idaho)** – The Moscow Police Department is releasing the following supplemental information in reference to the homicide of Kathryn M. Benoit and suicide of Ernesto Bustamante.

Documents seized during the search of hotel room #213 at the University Inn confirm Kathryn M. Benoit and Ernesto Bustamante first met in the fall semester of 2010 when Kathryn M. Benoit was a student taking psychology 218 taught by Professor Ernesto Bustamante. It was determined that by the end of the semester Kathryn M. Benoit and Professor Bustamante were involved in an active sexual relationship. Documents seized pursuant to the warrant indicates that Kathryn M. Benoit filed a sexual harassment complaint with the University of Idaho on June 12, 2011. In the complaint it was alleged that threats of violence occurred on three separate occasions where Professor Bustamante held a gun to her head and detailed the manner in which he would use it. The first incident occurred the end of January 2011, the second incident occurred the week after spring break 2011, and the third incident occurred the second week of May 2011, which ended the relationship. Professor Bustamante denied the allegations of violence and sexual harassment. Professor Bustamante filed a formal complaint against Kathryn M. Benoit on July 8, 2011 in reference to making unfounded complaints and potential defamation of character. Professor Bustamante stated the two had a close personal relationship sharing intimate aspects about their personal lives.

On June 10, 2011 at 3:04 p.m. Lt. Lehmitz received a telephone call from Kathryn M. Benoit. This call was a result of the University of Idaho referring her to address safety concerns. Lt. Lehmitz spoke with

her advising her of basic safety principles and to call police if any threatening or suspicious incident(s) were to occur.

On July 14, 2011, the University of Idaho requested the Moscow Police Department participate in a threat assessment concerning the alleged threatening behavior of Professor Ernesto Bustamante relating to Kathryn M. Benoit. As a result of the information gathered in the threat assessment, the Moscow Police Department attempted several phone contacts with Kathryn M. Benoit, leaving messages to get in touch with the Moscow Police Campus Division, but she did not return the phone calls. The Moscow Police Department notified the University of Idaho that Kathryn M. Benoit was not returning phone calls. The University of Idaho indicated Kathryn M. Benoit had been referred to Alternatives to Violence of the Palouse and that a safety plan had been discussed. The Moscow Police Department was then informed by the University of Idaho that Kathryn M. Benoit did not want law enforcement involvement.

On July 19, 2011 the University of Idaho notified the Moscow Police Department they were not able to make contact with Kathryn M. Benoit and requested that police conduct a check of her welfare. Before the Moscow Police Department was able to make contact with Kathryn M. Benoit, the University of Idaho called the Moscow Police Campus Division and cancelled the welfare check request as the University of Idaho had made telephone contact with Kathryn M. Benoit and confirmed her welfare.

The only Moscow Police Department records relating to Kathryn M. Benoit indicate that she had pawned property on three different occasions during 2011.

The search of University Inn hotel room #213 on August 23, 2011 where Ernesto Bustamante was located recovered the following medications and weapons;

- Clonazepam: Used as an anticonvulsant for epilepsy and as a sedative for sleep disorders.
- Lexapro: Used to treat anxiety in adults and major depressive disorder in adults.
- Lamotrigine: Used in the treatment of epilepsy and bipolar disorder. It is also used as an adjunct in treating depression.
- Alprazolam: Used to treat moderate to severe anxiety disorders.

The above listed prescription medications were contained in bottles bearing his name.

- Smith and Wesson M&P .45 caliber handgun which is believed to be the weapon used to murder Kathryn M. Benoit.
- Smith and Wesson .44 caliber revolver which is believed to be the weapon used by Ernesto Bustamante to commit suicide.
- Springfield Armory .45 caliber handgun.
- Ruger LCP .380 caliber handgun.
- Glock 9mm caliber handgun.
- Taurus Judge .45 caliber / .410 gauge handgun.
- Additional ammunition was also recovered in the hotel room for the weapons listed.

Moscow Police Department records indicate that Ernesto Bustamante had the following contacts:

- July 30, 2009 he was issued a citation for failing to obey a blinking red traffic signal light. He plead guilty and paid a fine of \$85.00.
- March 29, 2010 he was issued a citation for failing to show proof of vehicle insurance. That citation was later dismissed when he provided proof of insurance to the court.

- July 4, 2010 he was a complainant in reference to a fireworks call.
- October 24, 2010 he was referenced as an ex-boyfriend in a report of a suicide attempt. He was never contacted or found to be involved in this reported incident.
- November 2, 2010 he was a victim of a battery and a malicious injury to property. The suspect was cited and released for battery and malicious injury to property. The suspect pled guilty to an amended charge of disturbing the peace. The battery charge was dismissed.
- November 30, 2010 as a result of the incident of November 2, 2010 a protection order was issued identifying Ernesto Bustamante as the protected person.

Ernesto Bustamante was issued a concealed weapons permit on March 28, 2011, expiring March 28, 2016 through the Latah County Sheriff's Office.

Preliminary review of cell phone data dating back to July 24, 2011 indicate Kathryn M. Benoit and Ernesto Bustamante did not have any phone or texting contact.

Records seized during the course of this investigation reveal that Ernesto Bustamante had secured employment in the State of New Jersey and was in the process of relocating. He had made arrangements to move his personal property and vehicle on August 24, 2011.

An autopsy of Kathryn M. Benoit conducted on August 23, 2011 revealed that she had been struck eleven (11) times with .45 caliber bullets.

The investigation is still continuing with the execution of search warrants to obtain records from the University of Idaho and his personal vehicle that was impounded at Zeppos in Pullman, Washington.

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