

State College, Pennsylvania

May 8, 2019

CONTACT: Kathleen V. Yurchak, Esquire, yurchak@centrelaw.com, (814) 237-4100

Andrew J. Shubin, Esquire, shubin@shubinlaw.com, (814) 867-3115

**OSAZE OSAGIE FAMILY PRESS STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO DISTRICT ATTORNEY
CANTORNA'S DECISION NOT TO PROSECUTE THE STATE COLLEGE
POLICE OFFICER WHO SHOT AND KILLED THEIR SON**

Sylvester and Iyunolu Osagie, the parents of 29 year-old Osaze Osagie, an African American State College resident, who died on March 20, 2019 after being shot in his apartment by a Borough police officer during a mental health encounter, expressed "disappointment and confusion" following a May 7, 2019, meeting with District Attorney Bernie Cantorna and other law enforcement representatives. During that meeting, Cantorna announced that his office would not charge the officer who shot Osaze three times in the back. Osaze's mother, Iyunolou, asked D.A. Cantorna, "Isn't there something wrong when you send the police to protect your son to take him to the hospital and they send him to the graveyard?"

Sylvester Osagie, Osaze's father, described how he and State College police officers had been sharing information in the hours prior to the shooting and that he had been led to believe that he would be contacted when the police had information regarding Osaze's whereabouts. Mr. Osagie had been driving around looking for his son when a patrolman, detective and detective supervisor, who the District Attorney refused to name, entered Osaze's apartment building after receiving information that he had left the Weis Market carrying groceries and was walking toward his home. Tragically, Mr. Osagie arrived at Osaze's apartment, only to learn that a police officer had shot and killed his son minutes earlier. Expressing his anguish, Mr. Osagie told D.A. Cantorna that: "I thought the police and I were working together to protect my son. The police called me that morning to see if I had found Osaze. Why didn't the police call me before they went in to my son's apartment? I was driving around close by looking for him." Inexplicably, the responding officers also failed to involve the mental health professionals who were familiar with Osaze's condition.

Mr. Osagie told D.A. Cantorna: "There is no question that people in this community have been traumatized by the police shooting of our son – people of all races, people whose children have mental health issues, people who can no longer trust the police to protect their children." According to attorneys Kathleen Yurchak and Andrew Shubin, who represent the family, "The District Attorney's decision opens a new wound for the Osagie family, who will forever regret reaching out to the police to seek emergency help for their son."

#