

Chasity Nunez, victim of Worcester homicide, remembered as exemplary employee, soldier

WORCESTER — As Worcester reels from the killings on Tuesday of Chasity Nuñez and her daughter Zella, Chasity is being remembered as an exemplary member of the Connecticut National Guard and a beloved co-worker.

Police say Chasity and Zella Nuñez were killed in a car on Englewood Avenue on Tuesday when two people walked up to the vehicle and started shooting. Police made at least 40 markings at the scene of the shooting.

More: Suspects in murder of Worcester mother and daughter have long list of past charges

Chasity Nuñez was a patient administration specialist for the Connecticut National Guard, serving in a unit based in Danbury. She had served for four years, starting in 2020.

"Our hearts are broken because we lost Specialist Chasity Nunez to senseless violence. She and her daughter were killed while sitting in their vehicle in their own neighborhood on Tuesday afternoon. Chasity was beloved by her fellow Soldiers in the 142nd Medical Company," Maj. David Pytlik, public affairs officer for the Connecticut National Guard, said in a statement. "Her wit, social nature and dedication to duty made her one of the best Soldiers in our unit. I cannot begin to make sense of why this happened and why her family, friends, co-workers and fellow Soldiers have been robbed of her and Zella. What we can, and must do now, is support one another as we grieve, process this profound loss and honor their memory."

Pytlik described Nuñez as "incredibly resilient, brilliantly intelligent, destined for success in her civilian and military careers, and more full of compassion than anyone I know."

As a civilian, Nuñez worked as a patient safety and clinical quality program coordinator at MIT Health, starting in July 2023.

A spokesperson for MIT said the institution is offering outreach and conversations to community members who knew her. MIT Health staff have set aside time to mourn Nuñez.

Police: Two people shot on Englewood Avenue in Worcester Worcester police: Englewood Avenue shooting victims were mother and daughter With Gang Unit in courtroom, suspect in double slaying held without bail; 2nd suspect sought Chasity Nunez, victim of Worcester homicide, remembered as exemplary

employee, soldierSuspects in murder of Worcester mother and daughter have long list of past chargesGoFundMe page established for family of Chasity and Zella Nunez

In statement, Cecilia Stuopis, chief health officer of MIT Health, reflected on Nuñez's dedication to her position.

“Chas was passionate about the health and well-being of the MIT community. She was beloved by the colleagues who worked closely with her, and her dedication to our patients was powerful and impactful. She will be deeply missed,” Stuopis said.

According to a Worcester Public Schools spokesperson, Nuñez graduated from South High Community School in 2014. A Quinsigamond Community College spokesperson said she attended the college from spring 2015 to spring 2019.

Zella, a Worcester Public Schools student, was "a high-achieving sixth-grade student who had many friends and was well respected by her teachers," the spokesperson said.

According to her LinkedIn profile, Chasity Nuñez had also worked as a patient access representative for UMass Memorial Medical Center and was seeking a master's degree in data analytics from University of Maryland Global Campus.

UMass Memorial Medical Center declined to comment, citing confidentiality as a patient and former employee.

Karel Mangual of Sterling Street was arrested Wednesday and charged with armed assault to murder and carrying a firearm without a license.

Mangual appeared Thursday in Worcester District Court, where he was ordered held without bail pending a dangerousness hearing on Tuesday.

Police have also issued an arrest warrant against Dejan D. Belnavis of Worcester in connection with the killing. The search for Belnavis continued Thursday.