

STATEMENT FOR RELEASE IN RESPONSE TO MEDIA INQUIRY

CHICAGO (Feb. 8, 2008) - On March 14, 2007 Karen Chiang, a nineteen-year-old student at Purdue University and a longtime resident of Northbrook, died when the 2004 Mazda RX-8 automobile in which she was a passenger burst into flames after striking a concrete and steel support structure on E. Lower Wacker Drive, west of Stetson Ave. Karen had been home for spring break visiting her family, and was returning from a restaurant in Chicago with two other college students, Cindy Kim and Thomas Choi, at the time of the crash. Thomas and Cindy were also killed. Karen, however, survived the vehicle's initial impact. The medical examiner's report indicates that she suffered no serious injuries in the crash itself, and was instead killed when the vehicle caught fire shortly after the collision. Karen tried to escape the blaze, but was unable to open the vehicle's doors, even on the side of the car opposite the impact point, and died from fire and smoke inhalation.

Karen's family has retained the law firms of Asperger Associates LLC and John J. Malm, P.C. to investigate and pursue claims arising from the accident, on behalf of Karen's estate and surviving family members. On Feb. 8, 2008, attorneys for the Estate filed a fourteen-count complaint in the Circuit Court of Cook County. The complaint alleges that the accident occurred when Thomas Choi, who was driving, lost control of his vehicle. The complaint also alleges that the Mazda RX-8 in which Karen was a passenger was improperly designed, in a manner which made its passenger compartment unreasonably susceptible to fuel-fed fires, and with non-standard rear doors which can prevent rear-seat passengers from exiting the vehicle in the event of an accident. The complaint also alleges that crash barriers, to protect vehicles from the concrete and steel support structures on Lower Wacker Drive, were missing from the portion of the roadway where the crash occurred. Such barriers were installed on other portions of the roadway during the recent Lower Wacker Drive reconstruction.

Karen's family has requested that the media respect its privacy during this difficult time, and asks that any inquires be made through their attorneys only. The family also asks that the focus at this time not be on Karen's death, but on her life. Karen was a 2005 graduate of Glenbrook North High School, and was sophomore in the College of Liberal Arts at Purdue.

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Please address any inquires to Jeffrey J. Asperger, Asperger Associates, at (312)-240-0795 (office) or (312)-502-0089 (cell), jasperger@asplaw.net, or John J. Malm at (630)-527-4177 (office) or (630)-336-1496 (cell), john@malmlegal.com.