

Friends and Family Mourn Actress Killed in Union Square Hit-and-Run Updated 4 hrs ago

<http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20120601/greenwich-village/friends-family-mourn-actress-killed-union-square-hit-and-run> June 11, 2012

UNION SQUARE — Family and friends of the 21-year-old aspiring actress mowed down by a truck at [14th Street](#) and Broadway May 24 marked the one-week anniversary of her death with a Thursday evening vigil.

Roughly 30 people gathered at the southeast corner of [Union Square](#) at 5 p.m. to remember [Roxana Sorina Buta](#), who died after being hit by a dump truck as she headed from her [Village](#) waitressing job to her East [Harlem](#) apartment.

Buta's mother, Cristina Oprea, attended the ceremony with high-profile attorney [Joseph Tacopina](#), who said he began working with the family Wednesday to help identify Buta's killer.



Oprea, who [recently spoke with DNAinfo.com New York](#), said a lack of progress in finding the truck and driver that hit her only child worsened her grief.

"There will be no easy time for me, every moment since I heard she was killed," said Oprea, a 39-year-old pharmacy worker who lives in New Jersey. "A week has passed and they still have nothing."

Tacopina — who represented the NYPD officer [Kenneth Moreno](#) who [was acquitted of rape charges last May](#) — said he will coordinate with investigators to find the driver of the truck that struck Buta and look into potential safety problems at the corner where she was killed.

"I'm working to help this family get answers and hold all of those responsible accountable," he said. "I have no doubt that [police] will be able to ascertain, eventually, the identity of the driver and bring him to justice."

Buta's friend Lily DePaula, 21, told the group that held candles in the sunlight and observed a moment of silence, that Buta was remarkable.

"Roxi was our best friend and the most beautiful person we've ever known," DePaula said. "It's unfair what happened to her and we want to honor her."

She and her friends voiced frustration that police have not reported having identified the truck or driver.

"I don't understand how this can happen," DePaula said. "It's a week later and they don't know who did it still?"

Investigators are poring over security camera footage for dump trucks that were near Union Square on May 24 and those who might follow the same nightly or weekly route in the area, police said at a community meeting Wednesday.