

Driver Must Pay \$18M in 2016 Calabasas Crosswalk Crash That Killed Mother, Injured Daughter

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A jury has decided that a Malibu woman must pay \$18 million in damages for crashing into a mother and daughter who were in a Calabasas crosswalk, leaving one dead and the other injured, and later denying she was behind the wheel in the collision.



Yijing Chen appears in court in Van Nuys in an undated photo. (Credit: Al Seib / Los Angeles Times)

The jury also found Friday that Nicole Herschel, 39, acted with malice in the 2016 incident, which occurred at a 101 Freeway onramp. The surviving victim, Yijing Chen, had told authorities that after the crash, Herschel got out of her Chevy Silverado pickup, dragged the body of Chen's unconscious mother toward the curb, then reversed the truck and parked along an adjacent road.

Herschel waited at the scene of the crash, and when California Highway Patrol officers spoke with her, she maintained she came upon the injured women while driving to the supermarket. A CHP officer found her answers “evasive.” Ultimately, the CHP recommended criminal charges against Herschel, and she was [sentenced in 2017](#) to a year in jail after pleading no contest to vehicular manslaughter.

The multimillion-dollar civil verdict came after a brief trial this month in a Van Nuys courtroom. Chen’s attorney, Jonathan Ritter, said the trial offered some measure of closure to his client, but she still suffers from the harrowing loss.



Nicole Herschel, the driver of the pickup truck involved in a deadly June 2016 crash, tears up as she pleads no contest to vehicular manslaughter in a Van Nuys courtroom. (Al Seib / Los Angeles Times)

[Read the full story on LATimes.com.](#)

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