

Federal Prosecutor, Beranton Whisenant Jr., Found Dead on Florida Beach



Summary: *The body of a Miami federal prosecutor was found washed up on a Florida beach with head trauma.*

A body found on Hollywood Beach in Florida has been identified as a federal prosecutor working at the U.S. attorney's office in Miami. The man was found earlier this week in what investigators believe was a crime.

The body of Beranton J. Whisenant Jr. of Miramar was found with a head wound that Hollywood police suspect was from a possible gunshot or other trauma. Hollywood Police Department spokeswoman Miranda Grossman said, "The investigation is still very preliminary," with detectives and the Broward medical examiner "still looking at it."

Generally when a federal prosecutor or agent is killed in a retaliation or in connection to a criminal case, the FBI and U.S. attorney's office are all over the case, demanding an aggressive investigation. However, the FBI's Miami just passed any questions regarding the 37-year-old's death to the Hollywood police. Court records indicate that he was handling a number of visa and passport fraud matters.

Whisenant received his J.D. degree from the University of Florida law school and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 2004. He started working for the U.S. attorney's office in the major crimes section this year. Before that he worked in civil litigation for Miami law firm Foley & Mansfield and as a state prosecutor in Jacksonville. The office issued a statement in regards to his death, "The U.S. Attorney's Office family was deeply saddened and shocked to learn of Beranton's death. He was a great lawyer and wonderful colleague, and we will miss him deeply. Our thoughts are with Beranton's family and friends." The office prosecutes criminal and civil cases from Fort Pierce to Key West.

An email was sent to other prosecutors and employees informing them of Whisenant's death without any details. Colleagues were shocked about the news. One of his friends, Miami lawyer Michael Feiler said, "He was the epitome of a gentleman and possessed an exceptional legal mind." He added, "He was very motivated by public service. He volunteered for the Florida Bar and planned to become a judge." Feiler joined the U.S. attorney's office after working for Miami law firm Foley & Mansfield.

Another friend, Miami lawyer Daniel Garcia explained that Whisenaut was pursuing a career in public service. He said, "I remember telling Beranton, 'This is the ideal job for you.' He had that prosecutor's passion. All I know is, he was so young and could have continued doing so much good with his life." The two worked together when they took depositions for asbestos cases around the state.

Acting U.S. Attorney Benjamin Greenberg and former U.S. Attorney Wifredo Ferrer were responsible for interviewing Whisenant for a position at the Miami office. Greenberg noted, "Anytime his name came up, people had glowing things to say about him both in and outside the office." Ferrer asked him what his greatest accomplishment was during the interview. His response was obtaining a law degree from the law school at the University of Florida at the same time that his mother did.

Whisenant had a wife and children. He lived with his wife Ebony, a physician who teaches at Florida International University's College of Medicine, and their three children in Miramar.

The exact details of his death are still being investigated, including where he was killed. His body was found washed up on the shore south of the Magnolia Terrance.

Do you think that it is strange that the FBI and U.S. Attorney's office are not more concerned about his death? Tell us in the comments below.

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