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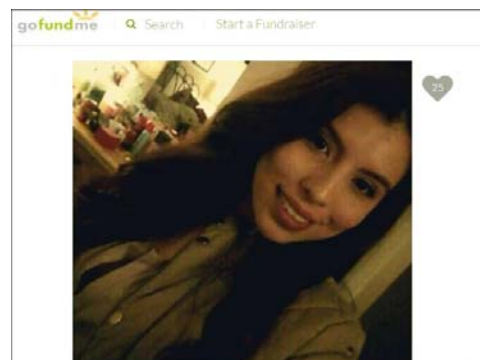
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# Mexico nightclub shooting: U.S. teen among dead had fallen while fleeing

By **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS** |

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One of five people who died at a [beachfront nightclub in Mexico where gunfire erupted](#) early Monday morning was a young Denver woman, according to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico. The pandemonium set off a bloody stampede by screaming concertgoers at an international festival in this Caribbean resort of Playa del Carmen.



A GoFundMePage was set up late Monday, Jan. 16, for Alejandra Villanueva after her family confirmed she was killed at the BPM Festival shooting in Mexico.

A [Gofundme page, titled “Tragedy in bpm festival,”](#) was set up for 18-year-old Alejandra Villanueva Ibarra. She fell as she attempted to flee the Blue Parrot club, which was participating in the 10-day BPM electronic music festival.

Quintana Roo state Attorney General Miguel Angel Pech said the shooting erupted when security personnel tried to stop a man from entering the Blue Parrot club with a gun. The gunman apparently fled.

Fifteen other people were injured in the crush to escape.

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The four others who were killed were shot at the club and were not Americans. Three of them were part of the security detail festival, said Pech, including Kirk J. Wilson of Toronto.



Police guard the entrance of the Blue Parrot nightclub in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, on Monday.

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Italy’s Foreign Ministry confirmed one of its citizens died, and the prosecutor’s office identified him as Daniel Pessina and said he was part of the BPM staff.

The Mexican victims were identified as Rafael Penaloza Vega and Geovanni Ruiz Murillo. The prosecutor's office said Ruiz Murillo was wearing a BPM shirt.

Ibarra's Gofundme page was posted by Roberto Aaron Martinez, who identified himself as Ibarra's brother. "My sister ... was killed in the tragedy that happened ... in Playa del Carmen," the page said.

It described Ibarra as being in college and working, helping to support the "home of a single mother and two younger siblings due to my mom being very ill. She was very young with a life ahead of her."

The Gofundme page used a photo of Ibarra from her Facebook page.

"Everyone ran, everyone was terrified, looking for their friends ... We were running away and then you hear more shots fired, like you don't know if you're going to be shot in the back or not," said New Zealand tourist Tyler Klee, who was outside the club when shots rang out.

His friend Ben Forbes, from Australia, said: "It happened pretty quickly as well ... You still didn't know where they were, how many there were."

Neil Forester, a friend, said Wilson was a longtime bouncer and was working security at the festival to lend a hand to its Canadian organizers. "He was just a genuine, one-of-a-kind guy," Forester said. He said Wilson was 49 and was married with two children.

Pech, the state attorney general, said a Mexican woman was seriously injured. He said eight of the injured were treated at hospitals for lesser injuries and released.



Flowers, candles, and a cross are placed outside barriers blocking the entrance to the Blue Parrot.

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The shooting occurred near the largest exit, setting off chaos as concert goers had to scramble over a metal fence to escape to the beach.

Jeffrey Castelein, 33, a fork lift operator from Belgium, said he heard 15 to 20 shots before he and his friends leapt the fence. “At first we didn’t realize, and then everybody fell down and you had to hide a little bit. And then we went out the back by the sea.”

Pech said the shooter apparently tried to enter the nightclub about 2:30 a.m., but was denied access because he had a gun. He then began to exchange fire with another person, and festival security personnel who tried to stop the shooting came under fire, Pech said. He said 20 bullet casings apparently from three pistols were found at the scene, but it was unclear if the security detail was armed or fired any of the weapons.

Pech said three people were detained nearby. It was not known if they had been involved in the shooting.

Quintana Roo Gov. Carlos Joaquin attributed the shooting to “the intolerance and conflict of interests between two people,” and also referred to it as “a personal conflict” between two people who exchanged gunfire. But he did not specify what the conflict was.

Playa del Carmen has largely been spared the violence that has hit other parts of Mexico. The state tourism department said the shooting was an “isolated act of violence” and stressed that “the situation in Playa del Carmen is under control and Mexican and foreign tourists can feel protected and safe.”

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