## By LILA SEIDMAN, IRFAN KHAN OCT. 22, 2020

Hundreds of cars descended on two Orange County cities overnight in a series of raucous "street takeovers," leaving one man dead and two people injured, authorities said Thursday.

Scores of vehicles had "completely taken over" Sunflower and Hyland avenues, according to Costa Mesa police Sgt. Zack Hoferitza, where several of the cars were reportedly doing "doughnuts" in the intersection. A pickup flipped at the scene shortly before 2:30 a.m., killing one of two passengers, police said. The second passenger was injured and sent to a hospital.

Authorities did not identify the dead man, but speaking to a Times photographer at the scene, Sergio Marroquin said the victim was his 23-year-old son, Sergio Marroquin Jr.

"I don't know what he was doing here," Marroquin said, adding that the family lives in Los Angeles.

The truck's driver, whom police identified as Mynor Augusto Esquivelvalle, 22, a cousin of the dead man, was arrested at the scene, spokeswoman Roxi Fyad said, as were several bystanders.

Costa Mesa officials said they were tipped off to the raucous gathering by Anaheim authorities, who had dealt with a similar street takeover an hour earlier.

So-called street takeovers involve street racers or members of car clubs taking over a stretch of road or an intersection to perform burnouts and other driving stunts.

Police in Anaheim were called to the Anaheim Plaza in the 400 block of N. Euclid Street about 1:30 a.m. after reports of a takeover there. Officers found about 200 vehicles had gathered in the parking lot to do doughnuts and other behind-the-wheel tricks, Sgt. Jake Gallacher said.

Cellphone video from the scene and obtained by ABC-TV Channel 7 shows a car spinning and then "drifting" in reverse before striking a woman and flipping her into the air. Black marks left from burning rubber tires can be seen along the pavement where the 18-year-old woman landed.

She was taken to a hospital with moderate injuries and is expected to survive, Gallacher said.

The driver of the vehicle that police say struck the woman fled the scene but later was found, police said. Preston James Shea, 19, was arrested on suspicion of felony hit-and-run and reckless driving causing great bodily injury. He was being held in lieu of \$50,000 bail.

When there are so many participants, and just a few officers, "it's challenging to address for officer-safety reasons," Gallacher said, describing the gatherings as "car clubs."

Those attending these types of car meet-ups are typically in their late teens or early 20s and find out about the events on social media, authorities said, adding that many have specialized cars.

"Large groups of these folks that are involved in these these clubs come together, and then they engage in dangerous behavior," Gallacher said.

And incidents are on the rise. A street takeover in February in Fountain Valley included fireworks and led to an officer-involved shooting.

"Throughout Southern California, we're experiencing an increase in car club activity," Gallacher said.

Anaheim police are now responding to calls about car clubs and street takeovers on a weekly basis, he said.