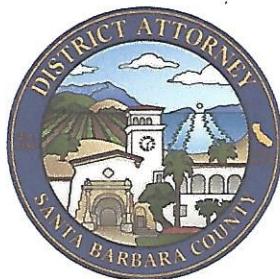


OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
JOYCE E. DUDLEY
District Attorney



DA 01-335

RELEASE NUMBER

January 5, 2016

RELEASE DATE

APPROVED BY *Joyce E. Dudley* JOYCE E. DUDLEY, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Hans Almgren, Sr. Deputy District Attorney

CONTACT PERSON (805) 568-2313

***** PRESS RELEASE *****

January 5, 2016

Re: People v. Andrew Baldarez; Santa Barbara Superior Court Case #1294110

Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today that Andrew Baldarez pled guilty to Second Degree Murder of Baldemar Leal of Santa Barbara, California, and admitted that the murder was done for the benefit of the Westside Criminal Street Gang to promote their primary activities of assaults with deadly weapons. Andrew Baldarez also admitted to having committed two prior serious felony convictions: Assault with a Deadly Weapon on September 3, 1992, and Assault with a Deadly weapon on October 5, 1998.

On February 21, 2009, Baldemar Leal was called by former defendant Michelle Flores-Murillo to meet at Brownies Market located on Cottage Grove and De La Vina Streets in Santa Barbara at 8:30 p.m. Defendant Imelda Guevara, an "associate" with the Westside Gang, instructed Michelle Flores-Murillo to make a call to Baldemar Leal so that he could be assaulted for perceived "disrespect" towards Flores-Murillo. The exact motive for luring Baldemar Leal to Brownies Market is not clear, as former defendants gave different motives for the crimes. Defendants and Westside Gang members, David Martinez, Jonathan Alonzo, and Andrew Baldarez, assaulted Baldemar Leal upon his arrival at Brownies Market with their hands and fists. Andrew Baldarez later stated that Imelda Guevara had approached him and others to "rough up" a person she was having a problem with. According to Andrew Baldarez, David Martinez punched Baldemar Leal in the mouth and Leal stumbled backwards. The remainder of the group then began attacking him. Andrew Baldarez stated that he "just snapped" and began "hitting" Baldemar Leal multiple times with a knife. Baldemar Leal died as a result of being stabbed to death multiple times.

"Gang violence continues to plague our county," stated District Attorney Joyce Dudley, "and it can only be stopped by a combination of education, intervention, and prosecution. Special thanks to the Santa Barbara Police Department for their determined investigation in these cases and to Senior Deputy District Attorney Hans Algren for his tenacious prosecution."

Sentencing is scheduled for February 29, 2016, before the Honorable Judge Michael Carrozzo, who is expected to sentence Andrew Baldarez to 25 years to life in prison.

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