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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
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District Attorney



DA 01-139

RELEASE NUMBER

January 30, 2013

RELEASE DATE

APPROVED BY *Joyce E. Dudley*, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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

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**Stephanie Mendoza awarded the *Patricia Lewis Witness of the Year Award*
at 2013 CDAA Winter Workshop, Indian Wells, California**

District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today that a Santa Barbara County witness was awarded the coveted Patricia Lewis Witness of the Year Award from the California District Attorney's Association. Stephanie Mendoza was presented with the award at noon today at The Miramonte Resort in Indian Wells, California.

Ms. Mendoza was recognized for her bravery in aiding the Santa Barbara Police Department and the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office as she surreptitiously audio taped a relative twice as he confessed to torturing a homeless woman in Santa Barbara. Stephanie Mendoza's courage was again tested when she was asked to testify against the relative, amidst her own internal discomfort and external threats.

As a result of Ms. Mendoza's actions the defendant, Samuel Martinez, Jr., was convicted of torture and is now serving a life sentence in prison.

The Patricia Lewis Witness of the Year Award was presented to Ms. Stephanie Mendoza by Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley, who stated, "Without the courage, strength and strong moral compass of Ms. Mendoza, this crime could have remained unsolved and justice would not have been served."

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