



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF KERN

CIVIC CENTER JUSTICE BUILDING
1215 TRUXTUN AVENUE
BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA 93301
(661) 868-2340, FAX: (661) 868-2700

CYNTHIA J. ZIMMER
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

ANDREA S. KOHLER
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JOSEPH A. KINZEL
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT:
DDA Cole Sherman
(661) 868-2350

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Jury Finds Aaron Garcia Guilty of First-Degree Murder
People v. Aaron Garcia: Kern County Superior Court Case #BF185437A

(Bakersfield) - On February 11, 2025, a Kern County jury found Aaron Garcia guilty of the First-Degree murder of victim Jose Aleman. The jury also found Garcia guilty of personally using a knife and of acting with a high degree of cruelty, viciousness, and callousness toward the victim. This case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Cole Sherman.

On the evening of May 3, 2021, at about 10:30 p.m., Aaron Garcia and two of his friends left the Broadway Market on foot and walked southbound on Broadway St. in Wasco. While the men were walking, a vehicle driven by the victim, Jose Aleman, brushed against one of Garcia's friends, causing that man to fall to the ground, but otherwise leaving him uninjured. The victim stopped his car immediately after the accident. Garcia ran to the victim's car, opened the driver's door, and unsheathed a knife that was in his possession. Without any provocation, Garcia stabbed Aleman's face, head, neck, and upper body as Aleman tried to crawl away toward the passenger side of his car. Aleman fell to the gutter where he was left bleeding from the numerous stab wounds inflicted by Garcia. Deputies from the Kern County Sheriff's Department responded to the scene along with medical personnel, who transported Aleman to the Delano Regional Medical Center where he was pronounced deceased.

Detectives located a knife sheath on the roadway next to Aleman's driver door and a blood trail leading away from the scene. Surveillance video was recovered from residences along the blood trail that showed Garcia and a friend leaving the area. Garcia was arrested on May 4, 2021. DNA testing by the Kern Regional Crime Lab ultimately linked evidence of the crime to Garcia.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented: "Garcia's decision to murder Mr. Aleman over a minor traffic accident was cruel and senseless. The complete disregard for the value of Mr. Aleman's life that Garcia acted with is tragic and warrants the severe punishment he will receive."

After the verdict was returned, the Court found it to be true that Garcia had a prior “strike” conviction for assault with a deadly weapon. Sentencing is set for March 13, 2025, before the Honorable Judith K. Dulcich in Department 2 of the Kern County Superior Court where Garcia faces a sentence of up to 51 years to life in prison.

Aaron Garcia:

