



ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE



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Ventura Gang Member Convicted of Murder and Attempted Murder

VENTURA, Calif. – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that, after an 18-day trial, Erick Estrada (DOB 08/31/88) was convicted by a jury of the first-degree murder of Gabriel Gutierrez. Estrada was also convicted for the attempted murder and assault with a firearm of both Michael Owens and Thomas Bakkila. Special allegations related to the murder conviction, the attempted murder convictions, and the assault with a firearm convictions were also found true. Regarding the murder of Mr. Gutierrez, the special allegations that Estrada committed the murder while lying in wait, and that he intentionally discharged a firearm were found to be true. Aggravating factors that the crime involved great violence and that Estrada used a weapon were also found to be true.

On June 15, 2013, in the early morning hours, Estrada and a juvenile co-defendant confronted two male victims near the Ventura Pier. The juvenile co-defendant started a fistfight with Mr. Owens and Mr. Bakkila. During the fistfight between the juvenile and the victims, Estrada pulled out a handgun and fired multiple rounds at the victims. Both victims sustained gunshot wounds but survived their injuries.

In a separate incident, on July 31, 2013, Estrada and a different juvenile co-defendant confronted Mr. Gutierrez inside the Ventura County Fairgrounds and challenged him to a fight. The group exited the fairgrounds, and the juvenile again challenged the victim. The group moved to a secluded area, near a train trestle at the river bottom. After a brief fistfight between the victim and the juvenile, Estrada fired multiple rounds from his handgun at Mr. Gutierrez. Tragically, Mr. Gutierrez died at the scene.

After a thorough investigation, Estrada was arrested for the murder on July 22, 2014, by the Ventura Police Department. The arrest took place at the Ventura County Jail where Estrada was being held on attempted murder charges related to the June 15, 2013, incident.

Senior Deputy District Attorney John Barrick, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Major Crimes Homicide Unit, prosecuted the case. "I am grateful to the Ventura Police Department for their tireless investigation into these incidents, as well as to this jury for the hard work they did in sifting through the voluminous amounts of evidence presented in this case to reach the appropriate verdicts. I firmly believe the jury made our community safer with their verdicts today."

Sentencing for Estrada is scheduled on April 11, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 47 of the Ventura County Superior Court. He remains in custody without bail.

Case: 2014019638

Defendant Information:

Erick Estrada DOB 08/31/88

Convicted of:

- PC 187(a)- Murder
- PC 664/187 (a) Attempt Murder 2 Counts
- PC 245 (a)(2) Assault with a Deadly Weapon 2 Counts

Special Allegations

- PC 190.2(a)(15) Murder While Lying in Wait
- PC 12022.53(d) Personal and intentional discharge of a firearm
- PC 12022.5 (a)(1) Use of a Firearm
- PC 12022.7 (a) Inflicting Great Bodily Harm