



ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE



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Ventura Gang Member Sentenced to Life Without Parole, plus 126 Years to Life

VENTURA, Calif. – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Erick Estrada (DOB 08/31/88), of Ventura, was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole, plus 126 years to life for the murder of Gabriel Gutierrez, and the attempted murder of two other men in a separate incident. Estrada was previously convicted by a jury on February 14, 2024, of the first-degree murder of Mr. Gutierrez, and for the attempted murder and assault with a firearm of both Michael Owens and Thomas Bakkila. Special allegations related to all counts were found to be true, including that Estrada committed the murder while lying in wait, and that he intentionally discharged a firearm.

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 enormously grateful to the Ventura Police Department for their investigation into this case," Mr. Barrick said. "Despite its difficulties, they persevered to obtain the evidence we needed to put a very dangerous criminal in prison for the rest of his life. I hope the defendant's convictions can begin the healing process for the victims he created and devastation he left behind."

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.

Case: 2014019638

Defendant Information:

Erick Estrada DOB 08/31/88

Ventura

Convicted of:

- PC 187(a) – Murder
- (2 counts) PC 664/187(a) – Attempt murder
- (2 counts) PC 245 (a)(2) – Assault with a deadly weapon

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

