



RIVERSIDE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE
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**HEMET MAN SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR THE MURDER
OF 16-YEAR-OLD DURING ROBBERY FOR HIS CELL PHONE**

MURRIETA – Today, Dec. 4, 2015, a Hemet man was sentenced to death for the 2013 murder of a 16-year-old during a robbery of his cell phone.

Francisco Roy Zavala Jr., DOB: 7-4-92, was convicted on July 23, 2015, by a Riverside County jury of the first-degree murder of Eric Sargeant of Hemet. District Attorney Mike Hestrin sought the death penalty against Zavala, filing a special circumstance allegation of murder during the commission of a robbery. On Aug. 12, 2015, the same jury decided that Zavala should be put to death.

Today, Judge Stephen Gallon rendered that death sentence against Zavala.

The afternoon of Jan. 14, 2013 – just days after being paroled from state prison – Zavala approached Sargeant in the area of Acacia Avenue and Cherrywood Drive in the unincorporated area of Hemet. The victim was walking down the street using his cell phone. Zavala asked Sargeant for his cell phone and then started punching the victim when he refused to give it to him. The victim tried to run away but Zavala chased after him, pulled out a “Ginzu”-brand boning knife and stabbed the victim multiple times – killing him. The murder weapon was found in a nearby empty field.

The case, SWF1300713, was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Daniel DeLimon of the DA’s Homicide Trial Team.

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