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NEWS RELEASE
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TEMECULA MAN CONVICTED OF 2017 MURDER IN WALMART PARKING LOT

MURRIETA – A Riverside County jury found a Temecula man guilty of stabbing a man to death after a road rage incident and confrontation in a Walmart parking lot last year.

James Beckham Fortney, DOB: 6-9-77, was found guilty on Oct. 15, 2018, of second-degree murder - with an enhancement of using a knife - and one count of making criminal threats. He is scheduled to be sentenced at the Southwest Justice Center on Nov. 19, 2018, and faces a maximum sentence of 16 years, 8 months to life in prison.

On Nov. 29, 2017, Fortney started a fight with the victim, 19-year-old Kevin Rodriguez, in the parking lot of the Walmart on Temecula Parkway in Temecula. Fortney grabbed the much smaller Rodriguez by the throat and the victim tried to defend himself.

The two men briefly separated a few feet from each other but Fortney then pulled out a 6-inch folding knife. Without warning, Fortney lunged at the victim, stabbing him in the chest. The victim's girlfriend ran toward Fortney who threatened her by saying, "You're next." Witnesses called 911 and several began to administer aide to the victim. Using his cell phone, Fortney recorded the victim as he was dying and later joined in the life-saving efforts. However, Rodriguez died from his injuries. Temecula police arrived and Fortney was arrested.

The case, SWF1800013, was prosecuted by Deputy DA Daniel DeLimon.

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