



CRIMINAL CASE UPDATE

ROD PACHECO
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Michael Jeandron
Public Information Officer
Contact: 951.955.9215

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GANG MEMBER CONVICTED IN BRUTAL MURDER OF SECURITY GUARD

INDIO, CA: Today, April 7, 2010, a Riverside County jury convicted a Northside Gateway Posse Crips gang member for the murder of a Bower security guard in June 2007.

Jamar Leval Thomas, DOB: 12/01/88, was convicted of first-degree murder with a special circumstance of committing the murder during the commission of a robbery. He was also convicted of participating in a criminal street gang and armed robbery. The same jury will now be asked to determine if Thomas should face the death penalty or life in prison without the possibility of parole.

On June 9, 2007, 66-year-old Wallace Brown, a retired United States Marine, was working as an on-duty security guard for Bower Security. While he was sitting in his patrol vehicle in the early morning hours, he was attacked by four Northside Gateway Posse Crips gang members. Rocks were thrown at Brown's vehicle before he was approached by the men who tried to force him out of the vehicle. Brown struggled but was overpowered, pulled from the vehicle, severely beaten, and robbed. A Palm Springs police officer found Brown unconscious, but alive and in critical condition. Brown never regained consciousness and died from his injuries three days later at Desert Regional Medical Center.

Palm Springs police detectives determined that Thomas, along with Darius Devon Lee, DOB: 08/05/88; Jerrett Martell Lewis, DOB: 07/03/1989; and Akil Nijee Williams, DOB: 04/10/90, were responsible for Brown's murder.

Lee, Lewis and Williams are awaiting trial. Lee also faces the death penalty. Lewis and Williams face a maximum penalty of life without the possibility of parole as they were minors at the time of the murder and ineligible for the death penalty under California law.

The case, INF058881, is being prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Manny Bustamante. The penalty phase of the trial is scheduled to begin at 9:00 AM in Dept. 3R of the Larson Justice Center on Monday, April 12, 2010.

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