

## **Marion County District Attorney's Office Announces Sentencing in Shooting Death of Eduardo Jovani Garcia**

Marion County, Oregon. 3/14/2024.

District Attorney Paige Clarkson announced today that two individuals have been sentenced for their roles in the March 9, 2022, drive by shooting death of Eduardo Jovani Garcia. Mr. Garcia was 20 years old at the time of his death.

John Juarez-Juarez, 19 at the time of the incident, was sentenced to 15 years in prison after pleading guilty to Manslaughter in the First Degree and Attempted Murder in the First Degree.

Shooter Yahir Cruz-Rosales, barely 18 at the time of the incident, also pled guilty and was sentenced to 20 years in prison for Manslaughter in the First Degree and Attempted Murder in the First Degree with a Firearm. At the time of the shooting, he was on parole from the Oregon Youth Authority for Burglary in the First Degree.

Both cases were resolved via a settlement conference before Marion County Circuit Court Judge Jennifer K. Gardiner. She sentenced the defendants on March 14, 2024.

The shooting occurred at approximately 5:30pm on Hayesville Rd NE. The defendants were in a black 2004 BMW when they spotted the victim's vehicle on Lancaster Drive NE. For over three and a half minutes they pursued the victim through traffic until they were able to pull alongside the victim's vehicle in the opposite lane of travel on Hayesville Rd, where Cruz-Rosales shot the victim's car three times. Garcia was struck one time in the chest and the bullet lodged in his spine.

At sentencing, Defendant Juarez-Juarez confirmed that their motivation for the killing was gang related.

Both John Juarez-Juarez and Yahir Cruz-Rosales had previously been victims in shooting incidents. On December 7, 2019, John Juarez-Juarez was shot in the neck as a 16-year-old. He did not cooperate with the Marion County Sheriff's Office and the case was never charged. On February 27, 2022, Yahir Cruz-Rosales was in a vehicle that was shot seventeen times on Portland Road NE. That Salem Police investigation was ongoing when this incident occurred.

Investigations of those prior incidents never linked Eduardo Jovani Garcia in any way to those shootings.

Also inside the victim's vehicle at the time of the shooting was front seat passenger Zachery Retonong, 20. He was not injured. Subsequent to this shooting, Retonong was charged with Murder in the First Degree in Multnomah County for the August 7, 2021, death of Donhavin Saelee. Ultimately, Retonong pled guilty to Manslaughter in the First Degree and other firearm-related offenses. He is currently serving a 270-month prison sentence in the Oregon Department of Corrections for that incident.

Retonong's convictions created proof challenges for the prosecution in this incident, which was a factor in the negotiated resolution to manslaughter on this case.

"This is another senseless gang-related shooting death," District Attorney Paige Clarkson stated. "It is worrisome how common this narrative has become for young men in this community. This case, combined with tragic recent events, emphasizes the need to focus on gun violence prevention and community-based intervention of gang violence."

"Our deepest sympathies go out to the victim's family and loved ones. Especially Eduardo's daughter, who was yet-to-be born before this tragedy took her father."

The case was investigated by the Marion County Sheriff's Office with the assistance of the Salem Police Department. The lead Detective was Marion County Sheriff's Detective Noe Martinez. The District Attorney's Office would like to recognize his and his fellow detective's significant work in this investigation.

The case was prosecuted by Chief Deputy District Attorney Brendan Murphy. Any questions can be directed to [BPMurphy@co.marion.or.us](mailto:BPMurphy@co.marion.or.us) or (503) 588-5222.