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**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**For More Information Contact:**

Date: August 11, 2008  
Re: Gang member sentenced to life in prison

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**Modesto, California** - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that PABLO LOPEZ III, age 21, was sentenced to 50 years to life after a Stanislaus County jury convicted LOPEZ of murdering 17 year old Jefte Garcia to benefit the Norteno Criminal Street Gang.

On December 8, 2005, at approximately 7:00 pm, 17 year old Jefte Garcia, a Sureno gang member, took a can of black spray paint and began crossing out rival gang tagging that had been placed on the sidewalk in front of the Garcia house on Alamo Street. The tagging read, "YGL X4." "YGL" represents the Norteno clique "Young Gangster Locos" and "X4" is a common sign used by the Norteno Criminal Street Gang which represents the 14<sup>th</sup> letter of the alphabet, "N." **Pablo Lopez III and co-defendant Daniel Joseph Martinez** confronted Jefte Garcia while he crossed out the gang tagging. Jefte Garcia was joined by his brother, Jair Garcia, who was also affiliated with the Sureno Criminal Street Gang. A verbal argument began between the Garcia brothers and the two defendants.

The Prosecution's gang expert testified that **Pablo Lopez III and Daniel Joseph Martinez** are both members of the "YGL" Norteno criminal street gang and that crossing out a gang member's tagging is a serious act of disrespect in the gang world. Acts of disrespect by rival gang members are often responded to with violence, including murder. Murder is one of the primary activities of the Norteno Criminal Street Gang.

During the verbal confrontation, **Pablo Lopez III and Daniel Joseph Martinez** walked up the driveway and front porch of a house occupied by Kristian Sandoval who was also associated with the YGL Norteno Gang. **Daniel Joseph Martinez** told Kristian Sandoval to "get me the gauge." Kristian Sandoval handed a loaded, sawed off shotgun to **Pablo Lopez III**. **Pablo Lopez III and Daniel Joseph Martinez** then walked back to Alamo Street, re-engaging the Garcia brothers in the verbal dispute. **Pablo Lopez III** told Jefte and Jair Garcia to "go the corner," referring to the street corner down the street from the confrontation. When the Garcia brothers refused to go to the corner, **Pablo Lopez III** pulled out the sawed off shotgun which he had hidden behind his back. Both Garcia brothers ran away across the street near the front porch

of their house on Alamo. **Daniel Joseph Martinez** told **Pablo Lopez III** “just do it.” **Pablo Lopez III** fired a single shot of magnum buck shot, striking Jefe Garcia in the face and arm. Jefe Garcia died as a result of his wounds. **Daniel Joseph Martinez** was arrested two days later at a gang house on Hatch Road. Ammunition consistent with the shotgun round that killed Jefe Garcia was found at **Daniel Joseph Martinez’s** residence. **Pablo Lopez III** was arrested two months later on February 2, 2006.

**Daniel Joseph Martinez** was previously sentenced to 40 years to life for aiding and abetting the murder of Jefe Garcia.