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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: February 24, 2010
Re: Joan Ochoa
Convicted of Second Degree Murder

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Joan Ochoa, age 21 of Modesto was convicted on February 23, 2010 of Second Degree Murder. Deputy District Attorney Shawn D. Bessey prosecuted the case for the People.

On March 23, 2006 in Modesto, Ochoa encountered a young Hispanic male adult in front of a Smoke Shop located at 1661 Crows Landing Road. They exchanged hard looks as Ochoa drove by in a mustang convertible. It was reported Ochoa was wearing a red hat while the victim was dressed in blue. A short time later the two engaged in a verbal altercation that resulted in Ochoa pulling out a gun and shooting the victim several times killing him on the spot. Ochoa then got into the Mustang and drove quickly out of the area.

Although Ochoa was a juvenile at the time of the shooting, the District Attorney's office charged him as an adult because of the seriousness of the offense.

Upon entry of the guilty plea, the Honorable Ricardo Cordova scheduled a sentencing hearing for March 25, 2010. Ochoa faces 15 years to life in state prison.

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