



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Stanislaus County
832 12th Street, Suite 300
Modesto, CA 95354
Mailing address: POB 442, Modesto, CA 95353
Telephone: (209) 525-5550 Fax: (209) 558-4027

Birgit Fladager
District Attorney
Carol Shipley
Assistant District Attorney
Chief Deputy District Attorneys
Jerry Begen
Alan Cassidy
Dave Harris

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: July 22, 2011
Re: Conviction for threats to student

For More Information Contact:

Carol Shipley, Assistant District Attorney
Phone: (209) 525-5550

Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Merlin Cody Griffiths, age 25, of Modesto, was convicted on July 20th of threatening to commit a crime. Deputy District Attorney Samuel Getrich prosecuted the case for the People.

On March 30, 2011 the defendant approached a female student at MJC's East Campus and told her that if he were in the same mood he was two days ago that he would take her out onto the grass, strangle her with his backpack, rape her and kill her with whatever he had in his hands. The defendant was arrested four days later and denied making such statements.

During the course of the two-day trial, the defense continued to deny making the threats, but also argued that if the jury did find that he made the threats, he did not understand their meaning due to his significant mental health issues.

After the jury returned its guilty verdict, the Court, over the prosecution's objection, released the defendant on his own recognizance pending sentencing.

The sentencing hearing was set for August 29, 2011 at which time the defendant could be sentenced to up to three years in prison.

###