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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: November 1, 2021
Re: Alexander Steven Valenzuela, Sr.
Voluntary manslaughter conviction and prison sentence

For More Information Contact:

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Alexander Steven Valenzuela, Sr., age 41, of Modesto, was convicted on October 26, 2021 of voluntary manslaughter with an enhancement for personal use of a firearm. Deputy District Attorney Monroe H. Tyler prosecuted the case for the People.

On November 30, 2020, Valenzuela, aka "Giant," armed himself with a firearm before driving to a house in Modesto to confront someone he believed had committed domestic violence against his ex-girlfriend. The victim, Jose Manuel Rivera, Jr., who was also armed, reportedly went to the same residence to confront the same person on the same issue. Investigators later discovered that Valenzuela and Rivera also had a prior dispute over Rivera selling drugs in Valenzuela's territory.

Rivera was already there when Valenzuela arrived. Witnesses saw Valenzuela get out of his car and begin shooting while walking towards the house. Several rounds struck and killed Rivera. Valenzuela then fled in his car. Officers found a gun next to Rivera that had been fired once. The owner of Valenzuela's car reported it missing just before the shooting and implicated Valenzuela and an unknown male as the last people who were seen with the vehicle.

Originally charged with murder, witness and other evidentiary issues led to Valenzuela pleading no contest to Voluntary Manslaughter on October 26, 2021 before Judge Ricardo Cordova. Valenzuela also admitted to personally using a firearm in the crime.

Judge Cordova sentenced Valenzuela to an 11-year aggravated term for manslaughter and an additional four years for the firearm enhancement for a total term of 15 years in state prison. The conviction counts as a "strike" under California's "Three Strikes" law and may be used to increase any punishment should Valenzuela be convicted of a felony crime in the future.

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