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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

White pleads guilty to all 15 molestation charges Faces 19 years in prison

MERCED – Jonathan Harlan White (DOB: 11-10-1979) pled guilty today on the first day set for trial to all 15 counts of child molestation charged in the Information. The defendant was 27 years old when he began having a sexual relationship with a 13 year old gymnastics student. White was the victim's gymnastic coach at the time of molestations at the Westside Academy of Gymnastics in Los Banos, where White was a part owner along with his mother, Linda White.

The defendant pled to three counts each of violating Penal Code Section 288(A) – lewd and lascivious acts with a child under age 14, PC 288(C) – lewd and lascivious acts with a child age 14 or 15; PC 261.5(C) – unlawful sexual intercourse with a child under age 16; PC 288a – oral sexual with a child under age 16; and penetration of a child under age 16 with a foreign object. In this case the foreign object was the defendant's finger. The defendant will be sentenced on January 16, 2009, by Judge Brian McCabe in Department 4 at 10:00 a.m.

The molestations took place at the Westside Academy and later at the defendant's house. The defendant had the victim come to his house prior to going to Los Banos Middle School to engage in sexual activity.

The defendant wrote letters to the victim describing the different types of sex acts he wanted to have with her. Later, he admitted to police that he had sexual intercourse with the victim.

Deputy District Attorney David Sandhaus who prosecuted the case said, "evidence presented at sentencing will show that the defendant systematically groomed the victim for a sexual relationship and worked to alienate the victim from her parents."

"The evidence will also show," said Sandhaus, "that the victim was a highly intelligent child with very attentive parents, the message being that this could happen to anyone's child with a manipulative person like Coach White working on her."

As a result of the defendant's plea, he now has 3 strikes and has to register for life as a sex offender under PC 290.

"It is important that the defendant is now sentenced to an appropriate prison term to protect the public," said Sandhaus, "I am confident that Judge McCabe will look at all the evidence in this case and reach a just decision," added Sandhaus

END