

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Larry D. Morse II

ASSISTANT DISTRICT
ATTORNEY
Joseph M. Tresidder



CHIEF DEPUTY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
David Moranda

CHIEF DEPUTY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Harold L. Nutt

2222 "M" STREET, MERCED, CA 95340
TELEPHONE (AREA CODE 209) 385-7381
FAX (209) 385-7473

FORMER TEACHER CONVICTED OF SEX OFFENSES

A Merced County jury convicted Le Grand resident and former Golden Valley High School teacher Jesus Rivera, 46, of 6 counts of child molestation. The jury convicted Rivera of one count of oral copulation with a person under the age of 18, four counts of molesting a child age 14 or 15, and one count of annoying or molesting a child. As a result, Rivera faces 6 years in prison and will be required to register for life as a sex offender. Additionally, Rivera's teaching credential will be revoked. The jury deadlocked on 3 other counts.

"This was an extremely hard-working and conscientious jury that remained committed to their task even through the Thanksgiving holidays. Our office and the people of Merced County owe them a debt of gratitude," said Deputy District Attorney David Sandhaus, who prosecuted the case.

Sandhaus also lauded the work of members of the District Attorney's office, specifically Victim Witness Coordinator Lisa DiSantis and her staff. "Lisa and the Victim Witness staff were tireless in their efforts on behalf of the victims in this case and their families. The criminal justice system and especially a highly publicized jury trial can be very confusing and upsetting to those unfamiliar with the courts. The Victim Witness staff helped them through the process," Sandhaus added.

The charges against Rivera arose from a series of incidents over a two year period in which the Golden Valley High School drama and Spanish teacher engaged in numerous sex acts with underage students. The trial lasted 3 weeks, with the jury beginning its deliberations on November 19. One juror was removed for misconduct by Superior Court Judge Ronald W. Hansen, who presided over the trial.

"We hope that today's verdict provides some sense of satisfaction to the victims that justice has been reached, and that they can put this part of their ordeal behind them," Sandhaus said.