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November 1, 2007

## GANG MEMBER SENT TO PRISON FOR ASSAULT

Merced County Superior Court Judge John D. Kiriara sentenced Merced resident Daniel Tarin Garcia, 21, to a 15 year prison term stemming from an August jury verdict against him, according to Deputy District Attorney Christa Gonzalez. Gonzalez, who prosecuted the case, said that the charges arose from an April 24, 2007 assault in which Garcia and a fellow Norteno beat their victim for "disrespecting" them.

The incident occurred in a local apartment complex. As Garcia and his crime partner drove into the complex at a high rate of speed, the victim, who was the maintenance manager at the complex, told them to slow down, Gonzalez said. Garcia, who was driving the vehicle, circled through the complex and ambushed their victim. Gonzalez stated that Garcia and his partner then assaulted the victim by kicking and punching him, while shouting gang slogans. The pair were arrested shortly thereafter by Officers from the Merced Police Department.

"It continues to amaze me how gang members resort to violence at the slightest perceived provocation," Gonzalez said. "This culture of violence results in innocent citizens becoming victims. I appreciate the jury holding this validated Norteno gang member responsible for this vicious, senseless attack", added Gonzalez.

Because Garcia has a prior conviction for a serious felony, his sentence was doubled under California's "Three Strikes" law. In addition to the sentence imposed for the April assault, Garcia was also sentenced on a probation violation. The prior strike offense means that Garcia will not be eligible for parole until he serves at least 80% of his sentence.