

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

GREENFIELD MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR GROSS VEHICULAR MANSLAUGHTER WHILE INTOXICATED

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Nicanor De Jesus Sanchez of Greenfield, age 23, was sentenced by Judge Julie R. Culver to 12 years and 8 months to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated, and driving under the influence of alcohol causing great bodily injury.

On February 11, 2017 the defendant, while driving with a blood alcohol content of .23, crashed his car through a road closure gate located at the Elm Avenue bridge east of the City of Greenfield. The defendant's Honda Accord spun out of control striking three pedestrians who were on the bridge. The pedestrians were crushed between the defendant's car and a steel guard rail and violently thrown into the Salinas River. Due to an abnormally wet winter the Salinas River was flowing very rapidly and had breached its banks, flooding farmlands and roadways throughout the county. Despite extensive wounds, two of the victims were able to make their way to the riverbank. The third victim, Julian Lopez, was carried downstream and his body has never been recovered despite multiple attempts by search and rescue teams as well as friends and family.

The defendant entered a plea to all of the charges during the third day of jury trial. This case was investigated by California Highway Patrol Officer Ryan Denker, Monterey County Sheriff's Sergeant Michael Darlington and District Attorney Investigator Terri Edwards.