



**JEANNINE M. PACIONI**  
District Attorney

## ***PRESS RELEASE***

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Contact: Stefanie Zamora, Deputy District Attorney  
Telephone: (831)759-6705

### **SURENO GANG MEMBERS CONVICTED OF ATTEMPTED MURDER, GANG AND FIREARM CHARGES**

*People v Fausto Arellano, Juan Ceja and Michael Serrano; SS170173A/B/C*

**SALINAS**, California- Monterey County District Attorney Jeannine M. Pacioni announced today that on February 7, 2019, Juan Carlos Valenzuela Ceja, age 28, and Michael Ray Serrano, age 22, were found guilty by jury of eight felony charges, including three counts of attempted murder, three counts of assault with a semi-automatic firearm, and one count of shooting at an occupied building. The jury also found that those crimes were done for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in association with the Sureño Criminal Street Gang. Fausto Samuel Arellano, age 22, was found guilty by jury of five felony charges, including multiple counts of illegal possession of a firearm, possession for sale of cocaine and methamphetamine while armed with a firearm.

On April 18, 2016, three victims were playing cards in the carport area of the Northridge Manor Apartments located on North Main Street in Salinas. Around 9:07 PM, Ceja, Serrano, and another male, approached the entrance to the carport area, pulled out semi-automatic firearms and opened fire. At least 23 rounds were shot, hitting one of the victims twice in the leg. Text messages located on Serrano's phone indicated that he and Ceja were out looking for Norteno gang members to shoot. However, the victims in this case were not affiliated with any criminal street gang.

On October 15, 2016, Arellano was pulled over for numerous traffic violations. Serrano was a passenger in the vehicle. During a search of the vehicle, officers located 25 grams of methamphetamine, 8 grams of cocaine, packaging materials, a semi-automatic .40 caliber firearm, and a police scanner. Officers determined that the firearm was loaded and unregistered with the Department of Justice.

Monterey County Superior Court Judge Andrew G. Liu will sentence Ceja and Serrano on March 29, 2019. Both Ceja and Serrano face up to 110 years to life in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Arellano's sentencing date has not been set. The case was investigated by Detective Derek Gibson of the Salinas Police Department, as well as District Attorney Investigator John Coletti.