



**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
COUNTY OF SOLANO**

**KRISHNA A. ABRAMS  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

**Sharon S. Henry**  
Chief Deputy

**Paul D. Sequeira**  
Chief Deputy

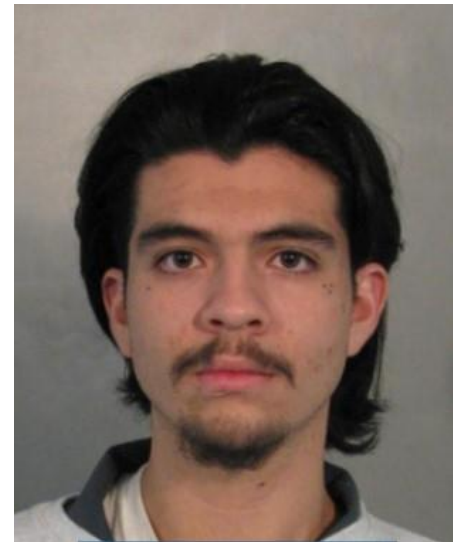
**Andre Charles**  
Chief Investigator

**PRESS RELEASE**

Release Date: May 6, 2021

Re: People v. Jose Alberto Gonzalez

On May 5, 2021, in Department 15 of the Solano County Superior Court, before the Honorable Judge Robert S. Bowers, the defendant, Jose Alberto Gonzalez, was convicted of First Degree Murder for the killing of James Michael Souza, in violation of Penal Code Section 187(a), for Personally Using a Firearm in the murder of Mr. Souza, and for committing the murder of Mr. Souza in association with the Brown Brotherhood criminal street gang, which is a subset of the Sureno criminal street gang.



On April 13, 2015, at approximately 3:30 p.m., James Souza, age 46, was out for his regular walk. Souza, who suffered from some mental disabilities, was listening to his earbud earphones and was walking in the area of the railroad tracks under the overpass at Sacramento Street and Yolo Avenue. This area is known to be a Sureno gang hangout spot; it is heavily marked with graffiti displaying that it is the territory of the Brown Brotherhood, or BBH. Gonzalez and 3 other gang members had been at that spot drinking and smoking marijuana. When the victim walked toward them on the tracks, Gonzalez and another gang member jumped down from the side of the embankment and confronted Mr. Souza. Gonzalez yelled, "Do you bang?" and when Mr. Souza did not respond, Gonzalez and another gang member shot Mr. Souza striking him 10 times. All of the gang members ran, leaving Mr. Souza to die alone on the railroad tracks. Mr. Souza was not found until the following morning by a homeless woman.

Six days later, Officer Ryan McLaughlin was on patrol and noticed a bunch of Surenos together just yards from the railroad track area. He saw the defendant Gonzalez had a gun in his waistband. When Gonzalez looked at the officer, he took off running and tossed the gun into the front yard of a residence. The officer caught the defendant and grabbed the weapon, as well. That gun was later determined to be used in this homicide.

Defendant Jose Alberto Gonzalez is scheduled to be sentenced on July 13, 2021, at 9:00 in Department 15 of the Solano County Superior Court.

Sergeant Jason Martinez of the Vallejo Police Department investigated the case. DA Investigator Charles Renfro assisted with later investigation and witnesses. Amy Warren was the victim advocate on the case. The case was prosecuted by Senior Deputy District Attorney Julie Ann Underwood.