

## Office of the Kane County State's Attorney



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### **ELGIN GANG MEMBER GETS 35-YEAR PRISON SENTENCE IN 2009 MURDER OF YOUNG MOTHER**

April 18, 2012

An Elgin man will spend more than three decades in prison for a 2009 gang-motivated shooting that resulted in the death of a young mother.

Tony Rosalez, 21 (d.o.b. 8-7-1990), of the 400 block of Sherman Avenue, Elgin, was sentenced late Wednesday, April 18, 2012, to 35 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Rosalez was convicted Feb. 29, 2012, by a Kane County jury of one count of first-degree murder.

Just before 10 p.m. Jan. 30, 2009, Rosalez was a passenger in a Ford Expedition driven by co-defendant Raul Perez-Gonzalez, 21 (d.o.b. 10-22-1990), of the 900 block of Jefferson Avenue, Elgin. Co-defendant Manith A. Vilayhong, 25 (d.o.b. 5-8-1986), of the 400 block of Prospect Street, Elgin, was in the back seat, along with two men who were not charged.

The men, many of whom were street gang members, had stopped at a convenience store in the 500 block of Bluff City Boulevard to purchase beer. Across the street was a group of men from a rival street gang, in a Dodge Durango, along with the victim, 22-year-old Paola Rodriguez, of Rochelle, and her friend, who were in a Pontiac Grand Prix. The five men in Rosalez's group drove across the street and flashed gang signs with their hands at the rivals. The rivals flashed gang signs back, which angered the Rosalez group. A car chase ensued, with the rival gang members in the Durango and the two women in the Grand Prix being chased by the Expedition west on Bluff City Boulevard and then north onto Raymond Street. Vilayhong, believing that the rival gang members were in the Grand Prix, ordered Rosalez to shoot a handgun. Rosalez fired a single shot that struck the Grand Prix driver, Rodriguez, and killed her.

On Oct. 15, 2010, Vilayhong agreed with the Kane County State's Attorney to a prison sentence of 20 years in exchange for a guilty plea to one count of first-degree murder and trial testimony against Rosalez. On Aug. 30, 2010, Perez-Gonzalez pleaded guilty to one count of first-degree murder and received a sentence of 35 years in prison. Both pleas were accepted by the late Associate Judge T. Jordan Gallagher.

“Paola Rodriguez’s death undeniably was senseless and tragic. We hope her family, and in particular her young son, feels a sense of justice with this prison sentence,” Kane County State’s Attorney Joe McMahon said.

“We hope that this sentence helps young people realize that blind loyalty to a street gang often ends in one of two ways – death or prison. Our community continues to say that it has no tolerance for those who terrorize our streets, and our office continues to act to ensure that civility reigns.

“Our thanks to the Elgin Police Department, and to Kane County Assistant State’s Attorneys Greg Sams and Robby Anderson, who successfully prosecuted this case.”