



**SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT**

155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**DATE/TIME: October 14, 2013**

**LOCATION: Santa Cruz, CA**

**TOPIC: Homicide Arrests**

**CASE NUMBER: 12S-06902**

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**INFORMATION:**

The Santa Cruz Police Department announces the arrest of 5 suspects in the homicide of 12 year old Joseph Mendoza. The homicide occurred on August 8, 2012, at the intersection of San Lorenzo Blvd and Bixby Street. Joseph was standing on the sidewalk when he was confronted by a group of suspects in a car. During the confrontation, the suspects fired several shots from a handgun, killing Joseph.

Santa Cruz Police Department Detectives have been developing leads and continuing follow up. Detectives have been working closely with the District Attorney's Office and Juvenile Probation to assemble the necessary leads to solve this case. The investigation revealed the motivation for this homicide as tensions between rival gangs.

The investigation culminated in the simultaneous arrest of all five suspects early this morning (October 12, 2013). Detectives also served search warrants at the residences of the suspects. Four of the suspects are juveniles and one is an adult. The adult is:

Andrew Carrera 19 years – Watsonville Resident

The juveniles are:

2 juveniles, both age 15, both were taken into custody from group homes in Exeter, CA and Placerville, CA.

2 Juveniles both 17 years of age – currently in custody at Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall

All of the suspects are Norteno street gang members. Four of the suspects were on juvenile probation at the time of this homicide. The suspects were Watsonville area residents at the time of the homicide.

We anticipate the arrest of a 6<sup>th</sup> suspect sometime in the next week. The outstanding suspect is currently in custody on unrelated charges.

The suspects were charged with (1) Homicide, (2) Criminal Street Gang Enhancement, (3) Discharge a Firearm From a Vehicle, (4) Firearms Enhancement

The family of Joseph has been notified of the arrests and the status of the case.

**For additional information, contact: Deputy Chief Steve Clark**

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