



COUNTY OF YOLO
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
JEFF W. REISIG, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

301 SECOND STREET - WOODLAND, CALIFORNIA 95695 - 530.666.8180 - FAX 530.666.8185

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 3, 2009 **Contact:** Steve Mount, Asst. Chief Deputy District Attorney
Phone: (530) 666-8381

Batterer of MySpace Jury Tampering Victim Sentenced to Three Years

(Woodland, CA) – November 3, 2009 District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that on November 3, 2009, Yolo County Judge Paul K. Richardson sentenced Miguel Dagoberto Lopez, 24, to three years in State Prison for battering the mother of his child, Angela Gonzales, causing injury. In August of 2009, a Yolo County jury convicted Mr. Lopez of this crime, despite the victim’s efforts to lie for Mr. Lopez and even tamper with a juror using MySpace, a felony for which she herself now faces charges.

Ms. Gonzales had reported a battery to the police then “recanted” or attempted to “cover” for Mr. Lopez. Gonzales’ initial report to the police was that Mr. Lopez struck her in the face then battered her head against the floor of their apartment approximately eight times. During the trial, however, Ms. Gonzales testified that she lied about the assault because she was angry with Mr. Lopez, and that the bruising on her face was the result of migraine headaches. In response, prosecuting attorney Ryan J. Couzens introduced evidence showing that Gonzales sought a restraining order two weeks after the incident and evidence of prior domestic violence. As a final effort, court records show that Ms. Gonzales improperly contacted a juror through MySpace to plead for an acquittal. The Court replaced that juror with an alternate juror and jury convicted Lopez.

At the sentencing, Deputy District Attorney Couzens requested State Prison, arguing that Mr. Lopez’s attitude and track record of theft and assaultive behavior had not changed in the last ten years. Although Mr. Lopez’s attorney and family made arguments for probation, Judge Paul Richardson sentenced him to three years in State Prison.

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