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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 24, 2010 **Contact:** Jonathan Raven, Asst. Chief Deputy District Attorney
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Three Striker Sentenced for Shattering Victim's Eye Socket on Picnic Day 2009

(Woodland, CA) – On June 24, 2010, Steven Hector Martinez, age 35, of Woodland, was sentenced to 31 years to life in the California State Department of Corrections by Yolo County Judge Kathleen White. On March 12, 2010 a jury convicted Martinez of one count of Battery with Serious Bodily Injury.

On Picnic Day, April 18, 2009, the victim reported he was at the Bistro 33 restaurant in downtown Davis when he saw people he thought he knew getting into a fight in the street area. The victim went over to stop the fight. The defendant, a complete stranger to the victim, “sucker-punched” him in the face with his fist. The defendant and the group with him then fled the scene.

Officer Munoz of the Davis Police Department was able to find and stop the defendant within minutes just two blocks away because a concerned UCD student witnessed the attack and followed the group as they fled the scene. The student used his cell to call 911, relaying the group's movements, descriptions and confirmed that Officer Munoz had stopped the right person. He later identified the defendant at the police station as the attacker.

At the scene, the victim identified the defendant, a known Sureno gang associate. The defendant had been released from prison only 100 days before. The victim went to the hospital by ambulance, but left before being treated because he said there were two elderly gentlemen who looked in worse condition. Three days later, the victim sneezed and his eye popped out of his socket. He pushed the eye back in and went to the hospital. A CT scan revealed his eye socket was shattered in two places and parts of the bone were dislocated and depressed into his head, causing extreme pain.

Judge White's sentence was based on the application of California's “Three Strikes Law.” The defendant had previously been convicted of 4 felonies, including a 1996 shooting in Woodland where the defendant fired several shots from a semi-automatic gun into a crowd of rival gang members. One bullet hit a 19 year old male in the throat, and another bullet struck a 16 year old male in the leg.

For more information, contact Assistant Chief Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Raven at 530-666-8180.

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