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NEWS RELEASE

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## **Three Sentenced for Chatsworth Street Racing Crash That Killed Two**

Two drivers and a third man involved in organizing an illegal street race were sentenced today for their roles in the race in which two spectators were killed, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Moira Curry said Karen Gary Balyan, 43, was sentenced to 12 years in state prison. He pleaded no contest on Dec. 22 to two felony counts of vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence and admitted to fleeing the scene during the commission of the crime.

Balyan also entered a no contest plea to one misdemeanor count of assault with a deadly weapon.

A second co-defendant, Israel Valenzuela, 39, was sentenced to a year in jail and five years formal probation. A four-year prison sentence was suspended. Additionally, his driver's license was suspended and his Nissan GTR which he drove on the illegal street race was ordered destroyed.

Valenzuela entered a no contest plea on Dec. 22 to two felony counts of vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence.

The third co-defendant, Henry Gevorgyan, 22, was sentenced to a year in county jail, three years formal probation and his driver's license was suspended. His Ford Mustang which was used in the race also was ordered destroyed.

On Dec. 24, Gevorgyan pleaded no contest to two felony counts of vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence.

Additionally, Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Daniel Feldstern of the San Fernando Branch prohibited Valenzuela and Gevorgyan from having any type of involvement in unlawful street racing during their probationary period.

Balyan and Valenzuela were behind the wheel of the two cars illegally racing near Plummer Street and Canoga Avenue in Chatsworth on Feb. 26, the prosecutor said. Balyan drove Gevorgyan's Mustang, while Valenzuela drove his Nissan GTR, the prosecutor added.

Within seconds of Gevorgyan signaling the beginning of the race, Balyan lost control of the vehicle and it slammed into a curb striking three spectators, according to court testimony. Two of the victims died, Eric Siguenza, 26, and Wilson Thomas Wong, 50. A third victim was injured but survived.

Case PA083096 was investigated by the Los Angeles Police Department, Valley Traffic Division.

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### **About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 71,000 felony defendants and nearly 112,000 misdemeanor defendants.