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NEWS RELEASE

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Two Men Plead in Highland Park Robbery, Chase Through Downtown Los Angeles

Two men pleaded no contest yesterday for their roles in a Highland Park robbery and a police chase through downtown Los Angeles last year, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced today.

Christian Manuel Cuevas (dob 3/3/83) of Las Vegas pleaded no contest to one felony count of robbery and admitted he personally used a firearm during the commission of the robbery in a negotiated plea agreement. Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge William Sterling immediately sentenced him to seven years in state prison.

Enrique Edward Rugelio (dob 2/19/88) of Highland Park pleaded no contest to one felony count of fleeing a pursuing peace officer's motor vehicle while driving recklessly. He was sentenced to two years in state prison and waived all of his credits for eight months he had already served.

Deputy District Attorney Sean Carney prosecuted case BA473252.

On Nov. 27, 2018, Cuevas and Rugelio went to an auto repair shop in Highland Park asking to buy a car battery, but instead took the battery without paying, the prosecutor said. Cuevas pointed a gun at the proprietor during the robbery.

After the defendants left, the police were called and officers with the Los Angeles Police Department spotted the vehicle pulling into a gas station. When officers attempted to detain the men, the pair fled in their car, leading police on a chase on the 210, 5 and 101 freeways and through downtown Los Angeles.

The pursuit ended when the defendants crashed into a bus bench at Sunset Boulevard and Echo Park Avenue. The pair exited the vehicle and fled on foot but were arrested shortly after.

The case was investigated by the LAPD, Northeast Division.

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 protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.