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NEWS RELEASE

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Three Sentenced For Christmas Murder in South LA

Three men were sentenced today for the fatal shooting of a 25-year-old mother in front of her 3-year-old daughter on Christmas five years ago, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Darnell Houston, 38, and Lamar McKnight, 28, were both sentenced to life in state prison without the possibility of parole, while Derrick Williams, 20, was given a 40 years-to-life prison term.

In August, jurors found all three men guilty of one count each of first-degree murder and attempted murder. Jurors also found true gang and gun allegations and a special circumstance allegation that Houston and McKnight killed while they were active members of a criminal street gang.

A fourth defendant, 20-year-old Ezekiel Simon, pleaded no contest to attempted murder and was sentenced in August to 29 years in prison.

Deputy District Attorney Antonella Nistorescu of the Hardcore Gang Division prosecuted the case.

Kashmier James was shot and killed on Dec. 25, 2010, in the 1700 block of W. 85th Street in South Los Angeles. James' daughter was sitting in the front seat of the family car when she saw her mother killed.

Houston and McKnight were later arrested and both Simon and Williams were teens when the crime occurred but they were charged as adults.

Case BA388294 was investigated by the Los Angeles Police Department.

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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.