



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF KERN

CIVIC CENTER JUSTICE BUILDING
1215 TRUXTUN AVENUE
BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA 93301
(661) 868-2340, FAX: (661) 868-2700

ANDREA S. KOHLER
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

CYNTHIA J. ZIMMER
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JOSEPH A. KINZEL
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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MEDIA ADVISORY

CONTACT:

DDA Melanie C. Ayala
(661) 868-2420
DDA Bobby Singh
(661)868-7619

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Life Sentence For Three-Strike Offender Convicted Of Attempted Murder In Stabbing Attack

People v. Joshua Molina: Kern County Superior Court Case BF180204A

(Bakersfield) - Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a jury verdict and sentencing today in a significant attempted murder case today.

On March 17, 2023, in a case prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Melanie Ayala, a Kern County jury convicted Joshua Johan Molina (hereinafter "Molina") of one count of Attempted Murder with premeditation and deliberation and one count of Assault with a Deadly Weapon, also finding true several special allegations involving great bodily injury and use of a deadly weapon. On May 22, 2023, the Honorable Tiffany Organ-Bowles sentenced Molina to 25 years to life in prison plus an additional 14 years. The sentence was elevated in part because Molina had suffered two prior "strikes" for violent offenses, which included robbery convictions from both 2015 and 2019.

On February 16, 2020, the female victim was seated in the front passenger seat of her friend's vehicle after both she and her friend agreed to give Molina a ride home. Both women had met him for the first time that day at a friend's get together. Molina sat directly behind the victim as he gave both women directions on where to drop him off. After asking them to pull into an alley, Molina began stabbing the victim on her face, neck, and all over her head with a knife. At some point during the attack, the victim was able to grab hold of the knife; however, Molina continued to attack her with his fists. A nearby good Samaritan heard the attack and pointed a firearm at Molina, causing Molina to stop and flee the scene. Molina was arrested days later after being positively identified by witnesses.

Molina's ultimate sentence from Kern County will likely be even higher than announced in this case alone because of another jury trial conviction in April of 2023 in case BF180376. In that case, which was

presented by DDA Bobby Singh, Molina was convicted of 13 felony charges relating to assaults on peace officers that occurred during a time he was in the Kern County jail. During that incident, five Deputies were assaulted by Molina, and at one point Molina gained control of a Deputy's Tazer and used it against the Deputies. Sentencing on that additional case is scheduled for June 1, 2023.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented on the conviction:

“Three Strikes laws play an important role in making sure that the most violent criminals are not given even more chances to victimize others. This case involved a cowardly, unprovoked attack, and comes after Molina had been convicted twice before in recent years of violent felonies. Molina’s continued violence despite being convicted of violent crimes in the recent past makes clear that more significant penalties – including a life sentence – are necessary to protect public safety.”

Joshua Molina:

