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SENTENCING IN SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS MURDER

District Attorney Jeffrey Rosell announced today the sentencing of Albaro Amaral Montalvo, Jr. for the murder of Kevin Medina Lopez on a rural Santa Cruz Mountain Road.

On June 14, 2020, Albaro Amaral Montalvo, Jr., took the life of Kevin Medina Lopez by shooting him in the back of the head with a small caliber firearm. He then turned the firearm to two female witnesses, shooting one in the hand and face, and attempting but failing to shoot the other. Both women were able to flee the area and survived the assault. The defendant also fled the scene, taking Medina Lopez's vehicle and evading apprehension for several weeks. With the assistance of other individuals, Amaral was able to set the stolen vehicle on fire and get rid of the weapons used to commit the murder.

After a thorough and extensive investigation by the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office, Amaral was located several weeks later and arrested. He was subsequently charged with allegations of murder, attempted murder, carjacking, intentional discharge of a firearm, being a felon in possession of firearms and ammunition, and having previously been convicted of a serious or violent felony. At a jury trial which began in late August 2021, the defendant, Amaral, was found guilty of all charges and special allegations. On October 15, 2021, defendant Amaral was sentenced to a total aggregate of 127 years to life in prison.

Assistant District Attorneys Conor McCormick and Nicholas Sympson prosecuted the case for the District Attorney's Office. "I am grateful that Kevin's murderer has been brought to justice. I hope this outcome brings his family and the surviving victims some closure," said McCormick.

"I appreciate the collaborative work of the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office and the District Attorney's Office to bring justice to the victims," said District Attorney Jeff Rosell.