



NEWS RELEASE

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Man Sentenced to 80 Years in Stabbing Death of 14-year-old Girl

Ezequiel Padilla-Villalobos was sentenced today to 80 years in prison for second-degree murder and kidnapping in the brutal stabbing death of a 14-year-old girl last December in Commerce City.

Gabriella Acosta was a freshman at Broomfield High School when she was murdered by Padilla-Villalobos on December 23 and left in a remote area of Commerce City after he was asked to give her a ride by another family member. Police found Padilla-Villalobos covered in blood at a gas station where he called 911 and said he wanted to turn himself in for killing a woman.

Padilla-Villalobos pleaded guilty to second-degree murder (F2) and second-degree kidnapping (F3) of a child with a knife as part of a plea agreement with a stipulated 80-year prison sentence. He had been charged with first-degree murder and first-degree felony murder.

Adams County District Judge Katherine Delgado told Padilla-Villalobos that the sentence was necessary to protect the family and society from “the vicious animal that you are. You will never see the light of day again and you don’t deserve to.”

District Attorney Dave Young described the case as the worst he had seen in 22 years as a prosecutor. “I have seen some very evil things done in the crimes I have prosecuted and this tops all of them,” he said.

“He took advantage of a 14-year-old little girl who was looking forward to the holidays last year,” Young said. He said Gabriella was an excellent student who wanted to become an attorney. “She wanted to make a difference in the lives of others. She had hopes, dreams, aspirations. On December 23, all that was taken away from her by this man.”

Young said a primary consideration in reaching a plea agreement in the case was to spare the family from hearing the horrific details of the crime during a trial. “I felt it was in the best interest of the family not to hear all the horrible things he did to her. I wanted the family to remember who Gabriella was, an innocent 14-year-old girl.”

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