

For Immediate Release
October 13, 2011

**LAGUNA MAN SENTENCED TO 168 MONTHS IMPRISONMENT
FOR SECOND DEGREE MURDER CONVICTION**

ALBUQUERQUE – U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales announced that, this afternoon, **Elias Whitmore**, a 19 year-old member of the Pueblo of Laguna, was sentenced to a 168-month term of imprisonment for his second degree murder conviction. Whitmore will be on supervised release for three years after he completes his prison sentence. He also was ordered to pay \$3616 in restitution to cover the victim's funeral expenses. Whitmore has been in federal custody since his arrest in September 2007.

According to court records, Whitmore and two others killed 38-year-old Loren Alan Kie at his home on the Pueblo of Laguna on September 2, 2007. Whitmore was 15-years-old at the time of the murder, but was prosecuted as an adult after the court granted the U.S. Attorney's motion to transfer Whitmore to adult status.

The criminal complaint filed against co-defendant Gerald Allen Mora, a member of the Jicarilla Apache Nation who was then 20, alleged that Mora and two juveniles, ages 15 and 16, killed Mr. Kie by bludgeoning and stabbing him to death. Mora, the only adult involved in the offense, was indicted on a first degree murder charge on October 10, 2007. On January 12, 2011, after the court transferred Whitmore to adult status, a federal grand jury returned a superseding indictment adding Whitmore as a defendant.

According to the criminal complaint, on September 5, 2007, officers of the Pueblo of Laguna Police Department (LPD) went to Mr. Kie's residence and found Mr. Kie's severely beaten body in a bedroom that appeared to have been the scene of a violent struggle. The LPD contacted the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and they initiated an investigation into Mr.

Kie's death. An autopsy of Mr. Kie's body on the following day revealed that the cause of death was blunt force trauma. Mr. Kie had sustained trauma to the head and torso, numerous stab wounds, a fractured wrist, a dislocated shoulder, missing teeth, and skull fractures.

The complaint alleged that, during a September 12, 2007 interview, Whitmore admitted his involvement in Mr. Kie's murder. Whitmore stated that he, Mora and another juvenile (the Juvenile) went to Mr. Kie's home in an attempt to get beer. When Mr. Kie demanded that they leave, Mora hit Mr. Kie in the face and knocked him down. Whitmore, Mora and the Juvenile then "jumped" Mr. Kie and beat him with their fists and a police nightstick that was under Mr. Kie's bed. While Mr. Kie was bleeding all over, Whitmore repeatedly hit Mr. Kie in the head with a brick. As Mr. Kie yelled for help, Whitmore repeatedly stabbed Mr. Kie with a knife, and then again bashed Mr. Kie in the head with the brick. According to a co-defendant, Whitmore administered the coup de grace with a weed-wacker. When the three assailants left Mr. Kie's home, they took their weapons with them and disposed of them after agreeing that they would not implicate each other in the murder if they were apprehended.

On May 12, 2011, Whitmore entered a guilty plea to an information charging him with second degree murder. In his plea agreement, Whitmore admitted to beating Mr. Kie to death.

On January 19, 2011, Mora entered a guilty plea to an information charging him with second degree murder, and he remains in federal custody.

The case was investigated by the FBI and the LPD, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Presiliano Torrez and Kimberly A. Brawley.

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