



Department of Justice

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Northern District of Texas

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**STREET GANG MEMBER SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON,
WITHOUT PAROLE, FOR ASSAULTING FEDERAL OFFICERS**

Defendant Fired Shots at ICE Special Agents During “Operation Community Shield” Operation

DALLAS — Rene Salazar, 20, of Dallas, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Sam A. Lindsay to 20 years in prison, following his conviction on various offenses related to a drive-by shooting in June 2009, in which he shot at four law enforcement officers, announced U.S. Attorney James T. Jacks of the Northern District of Texas.

Salazar was convicted at trial in January 2010 on all counts of an indictment charging two counts of assault on a federal officer and one count of possession of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence.

The government presented evidence at trial that on June 24, 2009, Salazar, a member of the East Side Homeboys street gang, shot at four law enforcement officers — two U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents and two officers from the Dallas Police Department’s (DPD) Gang Unit — who were taking part in “Operation Community Shield,” a federal roundup of gang members in East Dallas.

According to evidence presented at trial, that evening, at approximately 9:45 p.m., these officers had arrested a known gang member in the 400 block of Grandview Avenue. The two DPD officers were in a marked squad car, wearing blue police uniforms with a badge on the front, a “Dallas Police Department” insignia on the shoulder, and “GANG UNIT” or “DALLAS POLICE” prominently displayed in large white letters on the front and back of the uniform tops. The two ICE agents were driving an unmarked government vehicle and were wearing body armor with the words “POLICE ICE” prominently displayed on the front and rear. After the arrested gang member was transported from the scene, the two ICE agents and DPD officers remained at the scene to continue the investigation. One DPD officer was inside the squad car and one ICE agent was next to the car speaking with that officer. The other DPD officer was located on the curb speaking with a citizen about an unrelated incident, while the second ICE agent was near his vehicle providing cover.

A man, later determined to be Rene Salazar, drove down Grandview Avenue, past the officers, in a gold four-door sedan with one other passenger. Salazar stopped at the Grandview and Santa Fe Avenue intersection, pointed a pistol out of the window and fired three shots at the officers, before slowly turning onto Santa Fe Avenue and firing approximately two additional shots at the officers. All four of the officers took cover in order to avoid being hit by gunfire. The two ICE agents and one of the DPD officers, drew their weapon, aiming at Salazar, but were unable to safely return fire because of the densely populated neighborhood. This intersection is just down the street from Woodrow Wilson High School.

The DPD officers jumped into the squad car and sped away in pursuit of Salazar and soon thereafter, located the gold four-door sedan, driving with its lights turned off, down Alton Avenue. The officers chased Salazar to a residence in the 300 block of South Henderson Avenue, where Salazar jumped out of the car and ran into a residence.

After waiting for additional support, officers went inside and removed the other occupants of the house, for their own safety. Officers located Salazar in the shower and arrested him. After obtaining consent to search the house from Salazar's father, officers located the gun in the freezer.

The case was investigated by ICE, the DPD and the Dallas County District Attorney's Office Gang Unit. Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Hector M. Valle and Assistant U.S. Attorney Charles Brown prosecuted.

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