



PRESS RELEASE

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**FORMER MDC CORRECTIONS OFFICER PLEADS GUILTY
TO CRIMINAL CIVIL RIGHTS CHARGE**

ALBUQUERQUE – Demetrio Juan Gonzales, 40, a former corrections officer at the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) in Albuquerque, N.M., pleaded guilty today to one count of violating the civil rights of an individual in his custody when he struck and choked the victim in the shower room/dress out area of MDC.

According to court documents, during the early morning hours of Dec. 21, 2011, Gonzales was assigned to the Receiving-Discharge-Transfer (RDT) Unit at MDC where individuals are brought to be booked soon after they are arrested. Gonzales' job was to photograph and fingerprint those who are brought to RDT for booking. The victim, who had been arrested for Driving While Intoxicated, was verbally uncooperative during the booking process, but was not a physical threat to anyone. Nonetheless, Gonzales became angry at the victim and walked him to the shower room/dress out area where he knew there were no surveillance cameras. Several other corrections officers followed Gonzales to the shower room/dress out area. There, Gonzales physically assaulted the victim, striking him multiple times, and choking him, as evidenced by the marks on the victim's neck that witnesses observed the next morning. As a result of Gonzales' actions, the victim started bleeding. Gonzales acknowledged that the victim did not do anything to justify the beating, and as a corrections officer, he is not permitted to assault inmates just because they anger him.

Gonzales is facing a maximum of ten years in federal prison. He remains on conditions of release and under pretrial supervision pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

Fellow former MDC corrections officers Kevin Casaus, 23, and Matthew Pendley, 25, were indicted by a federal grand jury in June 2012, and are pending trial on charges related to this assault. Casaus is charged with violating the victim's civil right rights when he shoved and struck the victim while in the shower area/dress out area. Casaus is further charged with obstruction of justice and falsification of records, first for making false statements to detectives of the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) and then for falsifying his incident report. Similarly, Matthew Pendley is also charged with obstruction of justice for making false statements to BCSO detectives, and also for tampering with evidence by cleaning up blood from

the shower room/dress out area. Casaus and Pendley are presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

This case is being investigated by the Albuquerque Division of the FBI, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark T. Baker for the District of New Mexico and Trial Attorney Fara Gold of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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