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**San José Posts \$20,000 in Rewards for
Information about Recent Homicides**
Mayor Gonzales and Chief Lansdowne seek leads to solve cases



Mayor Gonzales; Police Chief Lansdowne and Councilmember Chavez

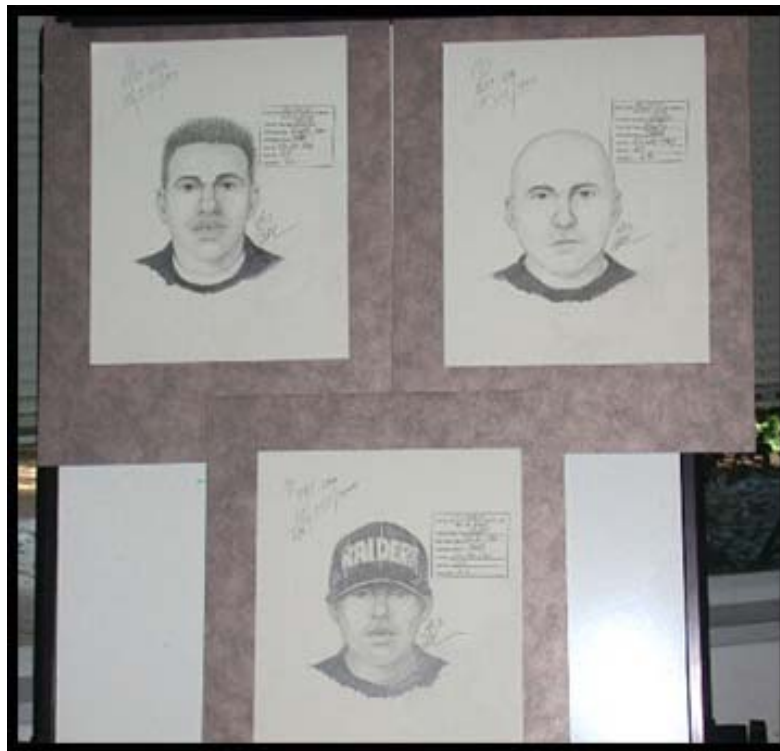
San Jose, CA ---- San José Mayor Ron Gonzales and Chief of Police William Lansdowne announced the creation of two \$10,000 rewards to help San José police solve recent homicide cases involving young residents.

“I join every family in our community to help make sure that criminals who prey upon our children can be caught and locked up as soon as possible,” said Mayor Gonzales. “Every day that a serious case is unsolved, the trail gets colder. We must generate public attention and additional leads with rewards for information that will help our police solve the toughest cases.”

San José police continue to seek information and leads to help solve two recent homicides of local teenagers. April Marie Sanchez, a 16-year-old student at Foothill High School, was found dead Saturday, April 19, by the banks of Coyote Creek near Yerba Buena High School in South Central San José.

Christian Jimenez, a 15-year-old student at Willow Glen Middle School, was shot at Selma Olinder Park last Thursday evening, April 24, in what appears to be gang-related violence.

In both cases, police are asking the community for possible witnesses, identities of suspects, and information that could lead to the arrest of suspects. **Anyone with information should call the police at (408) 277-5283.**



Artist renderings of Christian’s assailants

“We do our best work to prevent and solve crimes when we work in partnership with our residents,” said Chief Lansdowne. “Although San José police have an excellent record clearing difficult cases, we always can use more solid tips from the community that could make the

difference in bringing justice to young victims, especially after initial public attention and media interest have died down.”

Starting with his contribution of \$50,000, Mayor Gonzales established the “Mayor’s Safe Families and Neighborhoods Reward Fund” in June 2001 to help San José police solve difficult cases involving violence against children and families. Contributions from residents and businesses since then have increased the reward fund to help generate public attention and additional leads for police.



Mayor Gonzales with Channel 7 reporter Rigo Chacon

“San Jose has stayed the safest big city in America as a result of a great police department and excellent community support,” said the mayor. “This reward fund has let us build on this foundation to help protect every child and family in every neighborhood, and I renew my request for community contributions to help us achieve this goal.”

FBI crime statistics continue to confirm that San José’s ranking as the safest big city in the nation, and that the rate of serious incidents has fallen again this year. The California 2002 crime statistics released by the Attorney General Bill Lockyer on Sunday this week showed that San José’s crime index dropped more than eight percent last year, in contrast with the statewide trend of crime growing in major cities.

In addition to the reward fund, Gonzales noted other programs and services that are aimed at the safety of children and families through prevention

The San José Safe School Campus Initiative, now in every high school and middle school in the city, enables San José police to work with students, parents, and schools to develop effective methods to prevent and to prepare for campus emergencies and school violence.

The nationally recognized Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force, started in 1991, has successfully addressed issues of community safety and violent and gang-involved youth through collaboration by police, community service organizations, and schools.

Earlier this year police also conducted a major crisis simulation with the East Side Union High School District to practice school-based emergency response and identify opportunities to improve campus communications and training that can be used on other school campuses.

Contributions to the Mayor's Safe Families and Neighborhoods Reward Fund can be sent to Office of the Mayor, 801 North First Street, San José 95110; or to the Office of the Chief, San José Police Department, 201 Mission Street, San Jose 95110.

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