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NEWS RELEASE

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Man Convicted of Fatal DUI Crash in Pomona

A 39-year-old man was convicted today of driving under the influence of alcohol and fatally striking another motorist in 2015, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

The jury deliberated for less than an hour before finding Michael Daniel Gardner of Pomona guilty of five counts in case KA109665: second-degree murder, gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated, driving or taking a vehicle without consent, fleeing a pursuing peace officer's motor vehicle causing serious bodily injury and driving when privilege suspended or revoked for a prior DUI conviction.

The defendant is scheduled to be sentenced June 19 in Department S of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Pomona Branch. He faces at least 15 years to life in state prison.

Deputy District Attorney Lauren Guber, who prosecuted the case, said on the night of May 7, 2015, Gardner was driving under the influence of alcohol when he struck another vehicle near West Arrow Highway and Mariposa Street in Pomona.

Instead of stopping after the collision, Gardner fled from the area on foot, the prosecutor said. The injured motorist, Marissa Leigh Vasquez, 32, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Police located Gardner after the crash and arrested him, the prosecutor said.

During the investigation, authorities learned Gardner did not own the vehicle he was driving at the time of the wreck. The defendant stole the car from his neighbor, the prosecutor added.

Additionally, law enforcement discovered that prior to the collision, police attempted to pull over Gardner for a traffic stop. However, the defendant eluded law enforcement and soon after crashed into the victim's vehicle, the prosecutor said.

According to evidence presented at trial, Gardner had a .27 percent blood alcohol content and was driving 127 miles per hour at the time of the crash.

The case was investigated by the Pomona Police Department.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.