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NEWS RELEASE

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**Former Military Reservist, Relative Plead to
Identity Theft Scam Exceeding \$215,000**

Two men, including a former military reservist who stole the identities of fellow soldiers while stationed overseas, pleaded no contest today for their involvement in an identity theft scam totaling more than \$215,000 in losses, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Warren Kato of the High Tech Crime Division said former U.S. Army Reservist Gustavo Cervantes (dob 5/6/90) and his cousin, Rigoberto Cortez (dob 11/4/84), both of Pomona, each pleaded to seven counts of identity theft and one count of grand theft.

The defendants admitted a white-collar crime enhancement for a financial loss exceeding \$100,000.

Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge David Horwitz immediately sentenced Cervantes to three years, eight months in state prison. Cortez received a seven-year prison term. The men were charged in case BA425457.

The defendants were ordered to jointly pay \$179,815.45 in restitution. Cortez also must pay additional restitution of \$37,658.18.

During a 10-month period, starting in January 2013, Cervantes stole the personal identifying information of seven fellow soldiers while he was stationed in Kandahar, Afghanistan, the prosecutor said.

Cervantes provided those identities to Cortez who, from his Pomona home, established lines of credit and credit card accounts using the identities of the victims, the prosecutor added. Altogether, 10 financial institutions lost about \$217,000.

The case was jointly investigated by the U.S. Army, FBI and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Southern California High Tech Task Force.

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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 seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 73,000 felony defendants and 113,000 misdemeanor defendants.