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**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

Date: February 9, 2010  
Re: Matthew Lewis Black  
Murderer Sentenced to 19-years-  
to-life in State Prison

**For More Information Contact:**

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**Modesto, California** - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Matthew Lewis Black, age 29, of Turlock, was sentenced on February 9, 2010 to 19 years to life by the Honorable Thomas D. Zeff for Murder in the Second Degree with personal use of a firearm. Black pled guilty to the charges on January 26, 2010. Deputy District Attorney Elaine G. Casillas prosecuted the case for the People.

On October 4, 2006 in Turlock, Black complained throughout the day to many people that "people were hiding in bushes" and that he was scared "the people were out to get him." While staying at his sister's apartment, Black came into contact with his acquaintance, 20 year old Denise Swanner, another resident in the apartment complex. Swanner told Black that he did not need to worry about anyone hurting him while at the same time Swanner was showing him a gun she had retrieved from her apartment. Moments later, Black left the apartment in a quick fashion followed by Swanner. Black's niece, who had been present in the apartment, heard two gunshots, grabbed Swanner's two young children from the apartment and ran outside to find Swanner laying on the sidewalk with Black nearby. Neighbors helped officers find Black hiding nearby with the handgun in his pocket.

Prior to sentencing, several members of Swanner's family addressed the court. Swanner was described as a loving, young daughter, sister and companion, and "a proud mommy."

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