

OUTSTANDING POLICE DUTY AWARD - DETECTIVE BYRON GANSEN



On December 15, 2013, Salinas Police officers were dispatched to a report of a possible rape. During the initial investigation, Detectives Byron Gansen and Gabriel Gonzalez met and interviewed Jane Doe 1 and Jane Doe 2. They stated that while attending a house party on Saturday evening, both girls became extremely intoxicated. While Jane Doe 1 was in and out of consciousness due to her level of intoxication, three men took turns sexually assaulting her and Jane Doe 2.

During the investigation, Detective Gonzalez located a video recording on one of the suspects mobile phone that showed him sexually assaulting another female. Detective Gonzalez and Detective Gansen, subsequently located two additional sexual assault victims. Jane Doe 3 and Jane Doe 4 who revealed that on Friday, December 13, 2013, they too were

invited to the home where they were provided with and consumed large amounts of alcohol, ending up extremely intoxicated. Both were sexually assaulted and also recorded.

During the course of the investigation, detectives learned that Jane Doe 1 and Jane Doe 2 were sexually assaulted in a car on a separate occasion in October of 2013. In the case of Jane Doe 2, one of the suspects sexually assaulted her before she was able to escape the car with only her panties on. A few days later, the same suspect attempted to sexually assault Jane Doe 2 where she fought back and was helped by a good Samaritan who passed by the car and heard her yelling “stop” and “I don’t want to” from inside the car. This good Samaritan aided Jane Doe 2’s escape.

One of the suspects pled to a total of six sexual assault counts, five of which are strikes under California’s three strikes law. He was sentenced to 25 years in state prison. The second suspect pled to four sexual assault counts, two of which are strikes and was sentenced to 16 years in state prison. The third suspect pled to one sexual assault count which is a strike under California’s three strikes law and received a six year prison sentence. The last suspect pled to one sexual assault count which is a strike under California’s three strikes law and was sentenced to three years in state prison.

Detectives Gansen and Gonzalez were able to persuade the suspects who willingly gave recorded statements that included significant admissions to some elements of the sexual assaults. They queried the suspects on their mental state, which is critical in these type of cases. They were able to maintain trust with the four victims which was extraordinary, given the victims’ initial distrust of law enforcement.

Due to the diligence, motivation and team work of these detectives, justice was served for these four victims. They are to be commended for their rigorous efforts in pursuing these violent offenders and are hereby awarded the Salinas Police Department Outstanding Police Duty Award.

