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Antonio Rosales pleads guilty to 2016 killing of sex trafficking victim, 16-year-old Desiree Robinson

April 12, 2022

We are pleased to share that today Antonio Rosales entered a plea of guilty for the December 24, 2016 sexual assault and murder of 16-year-old Desiree Robinson of Chicago. Desiree had been the victim of sex trafficking and was killed in a garage in Markham, her tragic death creating a life-long commitment in her mother, Yvonne Ambrose, to get justice for Desiree and make sure no family endured this type of pain ever again. Today, Rosales was sentenced to 39 years in prison, followed by 3 years of mandatory supervised release and registry as a violent offender against youth.

"I have waited for this day for five-and-a-half years. Since the day I got the heartbreaking and life-changing news in December of 2016 that my daughter Desiree was killed, I have waited and prayed for all of the people responsible to be held accountable. It has been a very long road with many tears but today feels different. I am relieved that that individual who took her life will now pay for what he did to my beautiful daughter and to our family, although no amount of justice in the court system will begin to offset our loss... and her loss of what I know would have been a beautiful life. I'd like to thank the prosecutors for their dedication to Desiree's case, and also for everyone who worked on the earlier conviction of the person who trafficked her and will now sit in prison for decades to come. Thank you to everyone who has worked tirelessly to help protect other children and young women and men from being trafficked like Desiree was, and by going after Backpage.com where she had been advertised. Backpage was shut down in 2018, and I'm proud to have been a part of federal SESTA/FOSTA laws that were passed to prevent children from being knowingly posted by websites and predatory adults. And now we turn our focus to the federal trial against Backpage and its leaders. Thank you to everyone who has supported our family and friends in this journey, and to help bring more justice for Desiree today," said Yvonne Ambrose, Desiree Robinson's mother.

"Today's guilty plea by Antonio Rosales certainly brings a measure of satisfaction to those who loved Desiree Robinson, knowing he will be behind bars for decades to come. This, along with the accountability already secured for those who trafficked her creates much needed justice. However, Desiree's dedicated mother will continue her quest to finally hold accountable those who made it possible to advertise Desiree on-line, to send a message to every community that those who endanger and traffic other human beings will need to answer for their actions," said Bhavani Raveendran, Partner, Romanucci & Blandin.

Yvonne Ambrose is represented by Romanucci & Blandin Managing & Senior Partner Gina A. DeBoni and Partner Bhavani K. Raveendran.