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Defendant Sentenced for Brutal Home Invasion Robberies

Father and Son Victims Fought for Their Lives and Survived

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced today that Joshua Manu, a 33-year-old gang member who was convicted by a jury of 21 felony counts, was sentenced to life in prison without parole for the violent home invasion robberies he committed against several victims in two different households in February 2017. After the case initially went cold in 2017, law enforcement's investigation led to the defendant's arrest in August 2019 when he was finally charged for the horrific crimes he committed years earlier.

In August 2024, a jury convicted Manu of attempted murder, kidnapping, robbery, and other charges stemming from his two-day crime spree that terrorized seven innocent victims in City Heights and Lemon Grove. The home invasions occurred on back-to-back nights in the early morning hours.

"These families were attacked and brutally tortured in their own homes, after the defendant barged in on them as they slept," DA Stephan said. "These victims endured physical and emotional trauma and fought back against the terror the defendants brought to them. I want to especially thank Deputy District Attorney Chris Lawson for never giving up on bringing justice and accountability for these horrific crimes through many years of legal challenges and delays."

In this first home invasion, the defendant entered a home at 4:30 a.m. The victims in this case were forced by the defendant into a bedroom, stripped of their clothes, threatened at gunpoint, and stabbed repeatedly in their backs with a knife. The defendant and his co-conspirators demanded valuables and cell phones. Multiple victims were hospitalized from their injuries during these two nights of terror. Manu also armed himself with an illegal assault rifle during each event, ultimately firing the weapon 10 times at one home after two of the victims, a father and son, were able to fight back and force the defendant out of their home.

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Deputy District Attorney Christopher Lawson who is assigned to the DA's Gangs Division prosecuted this case.

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.