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PRESS RELEASE

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Chico Bike Path Shooter Sentenced to 7 years to Life in Prison for Attempted Murder

In Butte County Superior Court today, a now 19-year-old teenager was sentenced to 7 years to life in state prison for attempting to murder a Chico resident on the bike path near Rio Lindo Avenue in Chico when the teenager was 17 years old.

Deshawn Kelley, 19, of Chico, previously pleaded guilty on June 29, 2022, to attempted first-degree murder. Kelly had committed the crime when he was 17 years old and his case began in juvenile court, where the district attorney's office asked the court to send him to adult court.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey said that after over a year of hearings in the Butte County Juvenile Court, Kelley was found by the judge to be "unfit" to be tried as a juvenile and his case was transferred to the Butte County Superior Court as an adult.

Ramsey said the charges stem from a May 13, 2020 shooting on a bike path near Rio Lindo Avenue in Chico. At approximately 5:30 p.m. that day, Chico Police dispatchers received numerous 911 calls regarding gunshots in the area. A nearby officer arrived in under one minute and found a 23-year-old man severely wounded on the bike path with numerous gunshot wounds.

The victim was transported to Enloe Hospital with life-threatening injuries involving no less than seven gunshot wounds. The victim survived the shooting despite the extensive injuries he suffered. After a month in the ICU and multiple surgeries, the victim was eventually discharged from the hospital and began a lengthy recovery process that continues today.

Ramsey said an extensive investigation ensued and through surveillance videos, witness statements, and phone records, officers identified Kelley, who was 17 at the time, as the shooter.

Chico police detectives determined that Kelley went to the bike path with a semi-auto pistol to confront a high school classmate. However as Kelley was walking down the bike path, he heard a bicyclist coming from behind. Kelley then hid in bushes at the side of the path and waited until the 23-year-old victim was approximately three to five feet away. Kelley then jumped out of the bushes and unloaded the entire magazine of his gun at the victim.

The victim told detectives that Kelley did not say anything to him before the unprovoked shooting. The investigation determined Kelley and the victim did not know each other and there

was no motive for the shooting.

Detectives later learned that Kelley fled to Southern California after the shooting. On June 17, 2020, Chico Police located and arrested Deshawn Kelley, who had an AR-15 assault-type “ghost gun” in his possession.

At today’s sentencing hearing, the victim’s mother addressed the court. She described how her son was initially in surgery for more than six hours when the surgeon informed her that her son had nine gunshot wounds, and any single one of them could have killed him. She said the surgeon told her son’s heart stopped three times while in surgery. On the last time, the surgeon massaged the victim’s heart inside his chest for more than five minutes.

The mother told the judge how the victim has suffered from several infections, each of which had its own complications and many required additional surgeries and other invasive procedures. To this day, she said her son still has physical pain, suffers from nerve damage and numbness, and has three bullet fragments still in his body. She concluded her statement to the court by asking for prayers to bring healing and forgiveness to both defendant and victim.

The victim was unable to attend the sentencing hearing. However, he has previously conveyed that “...all I have to say is that every part of my life has been changed. I lost everything that made me me.”

Kelley agreed to waive all his previous in-custody credits. Kelly will be transported to the California Department of Corrections to serve his life sentence with a minimum parole date of 7 years.

