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**Dominick Gonzales convicted of punching transgender woman, sentenced to probation**

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that 38-year-old Dominick Gonzales changed his plea and was convicted of bias crime in the first degree, a Class C felony, for punching a transgender female in Northwest Portland.

“These bias crimes are extremely hurtful for the victims and our community,” said Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney BJ Park, who prosecuted this case. “Everyone deserves to feel safe. When someone commits a crime, especially one rooted in hate, we must act to ensure accountability.”

This investigation started on September 29, 2019 when the victim and her friend were standing in line for free coffee and food that was being provided to homeless individuals in the North Park Blocks. The victim, a white female, was wearing a dress when Gonzales approached her and started yelling at the victim for no apparent reason.

While yelling at the victim, Gonzales used racial and homophobic hate speech.

The victim’s friend tried to de-escalate the situation by stepping in between Gonzales and the victim, but Gonzales made multiple attempts to go around the friend while continuing to use homophobic and other derogatory hate speech.

Eventually, Gonzales was able to get in front of the victim and punched her in the face, which split her lower lip open causing it to bleed and swell.

Bystanders immediately rushed over to help the victim and to take Gonzales into custody. Before the bystanders could fully detain him, Gonzales got on a bike and fled the area.

Police arrived, located Gonzales nearby and took him into custody after a short pursuit.

Gonzales changed his plea to count one of the indictment that charged him with bias crime in the first degree.

He received three years of formal probation. During that time, he must complete a mental health evaluation and a separate evaluation for substance abuse disorder and follow all treatment recommendations.

He received 75 days of jail, with credit for time served. Gonzales has been in custody since September 29, 2019. Today marks his 76 day in jail so he will be released to his probation officer and must follow the probation officer’s release plan. While on probation, he will not be allowed to contact the victim or enter the North Park Blocks, located in the 200 block of Northwest Park Avenue.

The Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office recognizes Portland Police Bureau Central Precinct Officer Ryan Potter for his dedicated efforts investigating this case.

The Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office was an active participant of the Oregon Attorney General’s Hate Crimes Task Force and helped draft the language that was in Senate Bill 577. The law, which went into effect on July 15, 2019, renamed the crime of “intimidation” to “bias crime,” added gender identity to the list of protected categories and removed the requirement that two or more people commit the crime in order to make it a felony in certain circumstances.

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All potential bias crime cases, whether they are a felony or misdemeanor, are reviewed by the Violent Crimes Unit within the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office. If a misdemeanor crime is issued, the felony-level attorney will retain the case.

If you are the victim of a bias crime assault or you are witnessing one, immediately call 9-1-1. If you are the victim of a bias crime and the suspect is no longer present or if you have information about a bias crime committed in the past, call the non-emergency line at 503-823-3333.

#MCDA#

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