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10 Protesters Convicted of Illegal Trespassing

Agree to perform community service with San Diego non-profit Alpha Project

City Attorney Mara W. Elliott announced today that 10 participants in a July protest rally outside the downtown Federal Courthouse, during which they rappelled off the 16th floor of the Westin Gaslamp hotel to hang a large banner, have pleaded guilty to misdemeanor trespassing.

On July 2, 2018, all 10 defendants entered the Westin with the intent of trespassing on hotel property. Some chained themselves to a stairwell, blocking hotel security and the police from accessing the roof. Others acted as spotters as two rappelled off the side of the building to hang the banner.

On November 5, 2018, in plea agreements secured by the City Attorney's [Special Prosecutions Unit](#), all 10 defendants accepted [Community Justice Initiative](#) (CJI) offers. Each pleaded guilty to trespassing, and agreed to pay a \$150 administrative fee and to return to San Diego within 60 days to complete 16 hours of community service with the [Alpha Project](#), a non-profit organization that provides services and housing to San Diego's homeless residents. Once the defendants meet these conditions, their cases will be dismissed. Those who fail to complete these terms will be sentenced to five days in jail.

“These protesters were held accountable for actions that diverted police officers from our streets and placed officers, hotel security, and the public at risk,” City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **“Thousands peacefully protested in San Diego last summer without breaking laws or putting others in harm’s way. I am pleased that they will make amends by returning to San Diego and helping our vulnerable homeless population.”**

The two rappellers charged with trespassing were Kevin Chun Pang, 24, of Columbus, Ohio, and Brittany Renee Baker, 29, of Berkeley. The other defendants were Ethan Michael Buckner, 28, of Oakland; Roberta F. Capobianco, 27, of San Francisco; Katherine Nicole Wires, 31 of Oakland; Nora Wagner Rasman, 33, of Washington, D.C.; Nora Rachel Leccese, 26, of Boulder, Colorado; Brianna Latrell Gibson, 27, of Brooklyn, N.Y.; Jaque Fragua, 31, of Jemez Pueblo, N.M.; and Avery Sinclair, 23, of Washington, D.C.

CJI is a program of the City Attorney's [Neighborhood Justice and Collaborative Courts Unit](#) that allows people who commit low-level misdemeanors to earn a dismissal of their conviction by completing community service such as planting trees, recycling waste products, painting out graffiti, clearing neighborhoods of illegally dumped trash, and helping to provide services to the homeless. Additionally, participants have access to educational, job training, and drug and alcohol treatment programs. Since 2014, CJI participants have completed over 42,000 hours of community service in San Diego.

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