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May 27, 2021

Via Email to: editors@knockla.com

KNOCK LA
5617 Hollywood Boulevard, Suite 107
Los Angeles, CA 90028

Via Email to: info@groundgamela.org

GROUND GAME LA
5617 Hollywood Boulevard, Suite 107
Los Angeles, CA 90028

Re: Sergeant Michael Frazier - Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

Dear Messrs. or Mesdames:

I am very pleased to represent a man who I consider to be a hero, whistleblower Sergeant Michael Frazier of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Sergeant Michael Frazier is a paragon of what the public should expect from a law enforcement officer, and as a Black man in a Department characterized by systemic racism, has been doubly targeted for retaliation due to his race and his blowing the whistle on institutionalized corruption within his Department. A synopsis of his claims and heroic whistleblowing activities are attached in the government claim form that we have recently filed with the County of Los Angeles.

The reason I am writing to you is specifically due to an article entitled "*A Tradition of Violence: The History of Deputy Gangs in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department*" by Cerise Castle.¹ Much of the reporting by Mdme. Castle arises out of my litigation of whistleblower cases against LASD, and in particular a number of my cases in which I exposed the breadth and scope of the domination over Compton Station by a violent Deputy gang called The Executioners. "Part 14" of Mdme. Castle's series is solely about my lawsuits against LASD, and there is a good deal of language from the lawsuits that I authored that are quoted liberally in the piece. When I first read it, I have to admit my primary concern was why the author did not undertake basic journalistic measures such as confirming the contents of the lawsuits with myself or with my clients. My name, address, phone number, and email address are displayed prominently on each of the various lawsuits that Mdme. Castle quoted from, so this was a source of concern prior to my meeting Sergeant Frazier. But what came next was a real shame.

Mdme. Castle's "*Database of Known Associates of Deputy Gangs in the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department*"² is perhaps the most problematic piece of journalism I have ever read, and this coming from a self-described news nerd who has read all the major papers almost every day of his adult life. But the question is raised: is this held out as a piece of journalism? If so, where was the vetting and independent verification? None took place, which is a true tragedy, as our racketeering Sheriff can point to this list as largely fabricated, *and he is right!* After years of litigating the Deputy gang issues against this Department, I have become one of the foremost experts on the topic, and indisputably the "tip of the spear" in terms of effectuating meaningful change against LASD through public interest litigation at great risk to my dozens of clients who have been brave enough to come forward and stand

¹ <https://knock-la.com/tradition-of-violence-lasd-gang-history/>

² <https://lasdgangs.knock-la.com/>

up against institutionalized racism and corruption in the Department. One of the most brave is Sergeant Frazier... who despite being the victim of racism in the Department and a plaintiff in a whistleblower claim against the Department... is listed as being a “Gang Affili[ate]” of the 3000 Boys.

What were you thinking?? Sergeant Frazier has to deal with a Department that is trying to destroy him for whistleblowing and persecuting him because he is Black, and now some news outlet is identifying him as being “Gang Affiliated” with one of the Deputy gangs that he is fighting against on a daily basis, on behalf of us all? It’s simply false, and a huge and painful insult to Sergeant Frazier, and to myself.

A total disregard of journalistic ethics and best practices has resulted in a list that has little inherent value and plays right into Sheriff’s Villanueva’s narrative that the media is spreading false information. In this case, he is correct, and your gang database, in my opinion, is doing more harm than good. It contains unvetted, unverified, and blatantly false information and is representing that information as being responsible and objective journalism.

The purpose of this letter is not to threaten to sue you. I am an old-school, ACLU-type, liberal who believes that everyone should have the freedom of conscience and freedom of expression to publish whatever they wish. My concern, however, is that scores (or more) of individuals who are listed on your website as “Gang Affiliated” have valid claims against you for defamation. And given the fact this is a heavy, heavy allegation, coupled with a total lack of independent verification or vetting, I fear that these LASD personnel will likely win in any defamation action against you. I support the work you folks are doing (with the exception of this irresponsible list), and I would *implore* you to consider taking some steps to mitigate the harm that this list is causing. As it stands, it is indisputable that your website is falsely identifying people as being “Gang Affiliated.” This is troubling in a way that I am having some difficulty in accurately putting into words.

I’m not demanding you take Sergeant Frazier’s name down... in fact, I believe you have the right to publish whatever you like, even falsehoods. However, this entire list is fundamentally flawed, not in concept, but certainly in execution. It’s plainly incorrect. I appreciate Mdme. Castle’s enthusiasm in pursuing this story which has taken over every aspect of my life. However, this does not mitigate the fact that this enthusiasm, coupled with a total lack of editorial control for purposes of vetting and corroboration, has steered into recklessness. We can do better than this. Together.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at ajr@romerolaw.com or at (626) 396-9900.

From a place of caring and authenticity,

ROMERO LAW, APC



Alan Romero

Cc: File

Encl: Frazier Gov’t Claim for Damages

CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES TO PERSON OR PROPERTY

TIME STAMP
OFFICE USE ONLY

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read claim thoroughly.
2. Fill out claim as indicated; attach additional information if necessary.
3. Please use one claim form for each claimant.
4. Return this original signed claim and any attachments supporting your claim. This form must be signed.

DELIVER OR U.S. MAIL TO:
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, ATTENTION: CLAIMS
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 383,
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
(213) 974-1440

<p>1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. LAST NAME FIRST NAME M.I. Frazier Michael</p> <p>2. ADDRESS OF CLAIMANT [REDACTED]</p> <p>5. ADDRESS TO WHICH CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD BE SENT 80 S. Lake Avenue, Suite 880 STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE Pasadena CA 91101</p> <p>6. DATE AND TIME OF INCIDENT 4/27/2021 10:39 am</p> <p>7. WHERE DID DAMAGE OR INJURY OCCUR? 441 Bauchet Streett STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE Los Angeles CA 90012</p> <p>8. DESCRIBE IN DETAIL HOW DAMAGE OR INJURY OCCURRED AND LIST DAMAGES (attach copies of receipts or repair estimates): SEE ATTACHMENT</p> <p>9. WERE POLICE OR PARAMEDICS CALLED? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (IF YES) AGENCY'S NAME _____ REPORT # _____</p> <p>CHECK IF LIMITED CIVIL CASE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>TOTAL DAMAGES TO DATE TOTAL ESTIMATED PROSPECTIVE DAMAGES \$ 25,000,000.00 \$ 25,000,000.00</p>	<p>10. WHY DO YOU CLAIM COUNTY IS RESPONSIBLE? SEE ATTACHMENT</p> <p>11. NAMES OF ANY COUNTY EMPLOYEES (AND THEIR DEPARTMENTS) INVOLVED IN INJURY OR DAMAGE (IF APPLICABLE): NAME DEPARTMENT SEE ATTACHMENT NAME DEPARTMENT</p> <p>12. WITNESS(ES) TO DAMAGES OR INJURY: LIST ALL PERSONS AND ADDRESSES OF PERSONS KNOWN TO HAVE INFORMATION: NAME PHONE SEE ATTACHMENT ADDRESS NAME PHONE ADDRESS</p> <p>13. IF PHYSICIAN(S) WERE VISITED DUE TO INJURY, PROVIDE NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, AND DATE OF FIRST VISIT FOR EACH: DATE OF FIRST VISIT PHYSICIAN'S NAME PHONE 03/25/2021 Tina Theresa Varkey (866) 984-7483 STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE 2055 Kellog Avenue Corona CA 92879 DATE OF FIRST VISIT PHYSICIAN'S NAME PHONE STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE</p>
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THIS CLAIM MUST BE SIGNED

NOTE: PRESENTATION OF A FALSE CLAIM IS A FELONY (PENAL CODE SECTION 72)

CLAIMS FOR DEATH, INJURY TO PERSON OR TO PERSONAL PROPERTY MUST BE FILED NOT LATER THAN 6 MONTHS AFTER THE OCCURRENCE. (GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 911.2)

ALL OTHER CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES MUST BE FILED NOT LATER THAN ONE YEAR AFTER THE OCCURRENCE. (GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 911.2)

14. PRINT OR TYPE NAME Alan Romero, Esq. (SBN 249000)	DATE 05/25/2021	15. SIGNATURE OF CLAIMANT OR PERSON FILING ON HIS/HER BEHALF GIVING RELATIONSHIP TO CLAIMANT 	DATE 05/25/2021
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GOVERNMENT CLAIM FORM ATTACHMENT

8. Describe in detail how damage or injury occurred and list damages.

Claimant heretofore submits the following claim as against the County of Los Angeles (“COLA”). Claimant is a model Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (“LASD”) Sergeant who has been employed by LASD since 2007. Claimant possesses a BA in Criminal Justice from the University of Nevada Las Vegas and an MBA with a specialization in Organizational Leadership from Woodbury University. Claimant is an accomplished, African American sworn employee of the Department, who has personally undertaken to reduce Deputy use of force and the influence of unlawful Deputy cliques in Men’s Central Jail (“MCJ”). Claimant has served as a mentor to numerous Deputies in the correctional setting, and formerly participated in organized Department boxing activities. Claimant spent over five years as a patrol Deputy.

In May 2019, Claimant was assigned to MCJ as a newly-minted Sergeant. Based upon his education, experience, certifications, and trainings, Claimant was uniquely well-suited for a supervisory position at MCJ. Having previously worked at MCJ from July 2007 to July 2013, Claimant looked forward to this assignment as a homecoming, as this portion of his career had come full circle now that he was working at MCJ in a supervisory capacity. However, it distressed Claimant to learn that he would be provided with little to no training or mentorship upon his supervisory assignment to MCJ.

Various detention floors at MCJ have developed into environments where Deputies are not held accountable for out-of-policy uses of force or other misconduct. This lawless culture, particularly on the 2000 and 3000 floors, has resulted in festering gang-like Deputy activity. This has metastasized into cancerous outgrowths at patrol stations, particularly in South LA stations where the 2000 floor feeds many of its violent problem Deputies to (primarily Century Station) and Compton Station, where the 3000 floor feeds many of its violent problem Deputies to. To the extent that violent Deputy gangs exist at Century and Compton stations, this culture of impunity and lawlessness is a natural and unavoidable progression of the cancerous, criminal gang-like culture long-nurtured and openly tolerated at MCJ.

Upon his assignment to MCJ, Claimant was immediately troubled by a host of problems which were a function of poor supervision. This lack of supervisory control is a symptom of Deputy cliques having total control over certain floors, and the 2000 floor that Claimant was assigned to was notable forcibly for the fact that Deputy “shot-callers” had the delegated authority to “roll up,” or have sergeants reassigned, in violation of chain of command policies promulgated in the LASD Manual of Policies and Procedures (“MPP”). Resultantly, during the first three weeks on the 2000 floor, Claimant undertook to implement a fair and impartial supervisory regimen, encountering severe resistance from Deputies on the floor who refused to accept supervisory authority outside the framework of their “2000 Floor” Deputy clique and those with a Deputy clique mentality. During this time, when Claimant was first assigned to the 2000 floor, a 2000 Floor Deputy clique “shot-caller”, Deputy Estrada (who at the time was assigned to work 3000 floor), visited Claimant in his Sergeant’s office and informed Claimant matter-of-factly that he did not like Claimant’s hands-on supervisory style. Deputy Estrada informed Claimant that “there may be a problem with us working on the same floor,” when he rotated onto the floor during the following cycle. Despite being assigned to work on 3000 Floor at the time, Deputy Estrada spent most of his time with his

trainees on 2000 Floor in order to exercise his authority as a “Shot-caller” for the 2000 Floor Deputy clique. Deputy Estrada was the only Deputy allowed to wear a jacket on the floor, a demonstration of his position and authority as the “shot-caller” for the 2000 Floor Deputy clique.

Not long after his arrival on the 2000 floor, on June 19, 2019, (Ref. No. #019-02637-5100-058) Claimant was the investigating Sergeant with respect to a use of force incident involving 13 individuals (both “primaries” and witnesses). Due to Claimant’s attempts to hold the Deputies involved accountable for the circumstances leading up to the force incident, the 2000 Floor Deputy clique exercised influence and control over personnel management on the floor to have Claimant transferred off the 2000 floor. In the avoidance of doubt, this was an unlawful exercise of command authority by the 2000 floor clique and enablers within the LASD command structure that permitted the group’s “shot-callers,” who were subordinates, to have Claimant reassigned, even though he was the supervisor of the “shot-caller” who orchestrated Claimant’s involuntary transfer. On August 31, 2019, Claimant was thus involuntarily reassigned from the 2000 floor.

Prior to being reassigned, Claimant did not ask or tell anyone that he wanted to be reassigned off the floor. Claimant overheard subordinate Deputies gloating about how they had caused Claimant to be removed from the floor. Claimant first learned that he was being involuntarily transferred when one of his subordinates told him, “I heard you’re leaving the floor.” While Claimant was assigned to 2000 floor, Sergeant G. Alvarez told Claimant the 2000 Floor “shot-callers” had been previously reassigned training officers from the floor as punishment for holding 2000 Floor clique Deputies accountable.

Claimant is a highly-educated, rule-oriented, person of color; the exact type of Sergeant whose career the LASD should be facilitating. However, as a supervisor at MCJ, he was set up to fail, with no real training regimen or mentoring, as it is in the interests of the Deputy cliques at MCJ to ensure that no real supervisory regime is in place, which is capable of holding the members of the Deputy cliques accountable for their actions, out-of-policy, or otherwise. Resultantly, subordinate Deputy clique members conspired to take part in a campaign to “paper” Claimant, or to make repeated, frivolous complaints against Claimant in order to undermine his supervisory tenure and capacity. This disruptive practice is known to, and facilitated by, MCJ upper management.

Subsequently, Claimant was reassigned to “vacation” relief on Early Morning (“EM”) shift. In addition to supervising his floor(s), conducting day to day duties that being a supervisor at MCJ entails, Claimant was also responsible for investigating inmate grievances and conducting use of force investigation. At his orientation, Claimant was informed that he would be given only a few use of force investigations, and that after he attained competence in completing this type of investigation, future use of force investigations would be the sole responsibility of the Force Compliance Team, consisting of one Lieutenant and several Sergeants. Trouble was brewing, however.

Claimant initially requested to work EM Shift when he was newly assigned to MCJ but was not assigned to work EM shift. When it came time for Claimant to rotate to EM shift, he was initially passed up by someone with less seniority. Claimant was forced to contact the scheduling department and lodge a protest. As a result, Claimant was finally placed on EM shift.

During Claimant's five-month probation period, Claimant received more inmate grievances to investigate than are assigned to most similarly situated Sergeants for an entire year. The inmate grievances were tracked on a whiteboard in the Grievance Office, where Claimant learned that there was another Sergeant, also on probation, with a similar level of Deputy grievances that worked on the 2000 floor, who was being inundated with grievances in retaliation for his questioning administration about the floor and an institutionalized lack of Deputy accountability.

Essentially, Deputy clique enablers were slamming a whistleblower Sergeants with so many inmate grievances that it made it impossible for them to do their jobs. The wrongful objective was twofold: first, to retaliate against whistleblowers and set them up for discipline or termination based upon a failure to perform to standards, and secondly, but more importantly, to short-circuit the inmate grievance procedure to create an environment where inmates would be discouraged from filing complaints with the knowledge that any remedial action against LASD personnel, if any, would take years to come into play. Even then, after years, witnesses would be unavailable or unlocatable, resulting in a complete and total breakdown of the inmate grievance procedure to the point where it has now become effectively non-viable and non-existent. This has occurred by design, in order for LASD management to preserve the status and power of violent, unaccountable Deputy cliques at MCJ and other detention facilities. When grievances are not investigated for a year or more, witnesses can no longer be located. Involved Deputies have often transferred to other assignments where they are no longer reasonably available to be interviewed.

At the present time, Claimant is over a year behind on assigned inmate grievances and will never be able to catch up with the investigations. Some grievances are easy to resolve and involve single, isolated incidents. Those simple investigations are infrequently assigned to Claimant. Claimant is often assigned inmate grievances which require the review of multiple hours and/or days of footage from numerous different video cameras inside MCJ. This has made it impossible for Claimant to do his job, as the closer he gets to completing his work, the more work is piled on, resulting in a hopeless and *Sisyphian* trap. Claimant believed that he was being overwhelmed with more work than any one (or four) Sergeants could possibly do, so that he could be later targeted for demotion and transfer away from MCJ based upon the whims of the controlling Deputy cliques, those with a "clique mentality," and their enablers in MCJ management, in particular, Captains Matthew Vander Horck and Erick S. Kim.

Claimant has complained about being slammed with an impossible amount of inmate grievances, while similarly situated Sergeants receive little to no new grievances to investigate. On August 8, 2020, Claimant filed an internal administrative grievance with respect to his retaliatory predicament, as authorized by the MPP. What the Department characterized as a resolution to the grievance was then-Chief Brendan Corbett (who currently holds the position of Assistant Sheriff and oversees Custody Operations) reassuring Claimant that he would get some additional administrative days assigned to him to catch up on his work. During this period of time, Captains Vander Horck and Kim accused Claimant of "failing to perform to standards," as this concept is set forth in the MPP, and blamed Claimant for being too incompetent to complete his assigned work in a timely fashion. Claimant protested that chief Corbett had totally failed to address the substance of his allegations. To add insult to injury, a Sergeant (presently assigned to the Grievance Team) who Claimant had reported for sleeping on duty (despite his frequent overtime and weekly CARPS assignments), was promoted to Watch Sergeant over Claimant.

On May 19, 2021, Claimant was informed that he was going to be assigned a “Mentor” due to his purported failure to meet performance standards for falling so far behind on his inmate grievance investigations. However, Claimant continues to languish, buried under an endless and insurmountable mountain of complex grievances to investigate which would be impossible for any one person to complete.

Troublingly, due to chronic MCJ Sergeant understaffing over the past two years, Claimant was responsible for supervising two and sometimes three floors at MCJ. Although Claimant was entrusted with this excessive supervisory responsibility, he was also being castigated and reprimanded for incompetence in failing to complete his never-ending cavalcade of grievances. Accordingly, Claimant’s workload has not been balanced and his varied work assignments do not carry the same level of responsibility given his rank, experience, and capabilities.

Despite MCJ being chronically and hopelessly understaffed, approximately ten Sergeants have been pulled off the line and placed in desirable, comfortable, and specialized assignments within MCJ, and throughout custody division, sometimes in as little as six months. These ten Sergeants were all white and Hispanic. Claimant, who is African American, continues to languish, buried under an endless and insurmountable mountain of complex grievances to investigate. Despite having an immaculate and high-achieving employment record, Claimant was not invited to work any of these specialized work assignments, preventing Claimant from advancing professionally and making himself more marketable for further promotion within this Department.

Over the past two years at MCJ, the Grievance Office has claimed to be operating under extraordinary circumstances due to alleged understaffing. However, the Grievance Office has been fully staffed during this period of time with three Sergeants and a Lieutenant. The claim of being “short staffed” rings false.

Claimant is the most highly qualified, educated, and senior Sergeant among those similarly situated. Claimant has also earned an entire career of excellent performance evaluations. Similarly situated Sergeants work up to 120 hours of overtime a month in comparison to Claimant, who works only his mandated required overtime each month that ranges from 32 to 64 hours. These overtime Sergeants are generally assigned half, or less, of the amount of grievances that Claimant has been assigned over the course of the past two years, despite the fact that Claimant is not given overtime or administrative hours to complete the investigations. Claimant also claims that CARP and Sergeants who are working overtime have less responsibilities, as those responsibilities pertain to work load and supervision. Claimant believes that he is being targeted for demotion, transfer, and/or termination as a result of his protected whistleblowing activities and his race, to wit: African-American. This allegation is based upon Claimant’s observation that other similarly situated Sergeants who are white or Hispanic enjoy benefits of employment at MCJ and in the Grievance Office that are denied to Claimant.

For example, on February 24, 2021, Claimant was assigned two new grievances on the same day, even though his supervisors knew he was more than a year behind with his current caseload. The implications were clear: that command was killing two birds with one stone: (1) retaliating against Claimant for protected whistleblower activities pursuant to Lab. Code § 1102.5; and (2) further deprecating the inmate grievance procedure to the point where no clique-member Deputy or other

custody personnel could be held accountable for their unlawful conduct within the period of time that Claimant could meaningfully investigate the claims.

On May 12, 2021 Claimant was served with written notice that he would receive a written Performance Log Entry (“PLE”) reprimand for “fail[ing] to submit the remainder of the 2019 grievances assigned to [Claimant]. Two out of three 2019 grievances have not been submitted for review. As a sergeant on the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, you have a responsibility to ensure grievances are thoroughly investigated and completed within a time-frame set by Division and Department policy (Failure to carry out supervisory duties and responsibilities adequately and promptly - MPP 3-01/030.10.” The PLE is a punitive entry in Claimant’s personnel file that will permanently and adversely affect his future career prospects within the Department. Notably, when Claimant was a patrol Deputy at Carson Station and filed a hostile work environment complaint, Claimant was retaliated against by being the subject of multiple, baseless PLEs within a 24 hour period.

10. Why do you claim County is responsible?

At all times relevant to the instant Claim, the tortfeasor employees of COLA were working within the course and scope of their employment as an agent of COLA, with a *respondent superior* relationship existing as between the employee-agent and the employer-principals. All bad acts alleged to have been undertaken by the COLA employee tortfeasors against Claimant were carried out under color of authority, that authority having been vested in these tortfeasors by COLA. Had the tortfeasors not been COLA agent-employees, the harms herein alleged would not have transpired, and Claimant would not have been injured.

Pursuant to Gov. Code § 815.2, COLA is liable for injury proximately caused by acts or omissions of its employees within the scope of their employment if the act or omission would, apart from this section, have given rise to a cause of action against that employee or their personal representatives. Claimant heretofore alleges that the wrongful acts by the tortfeasors caused the injuries to them as set forth in this complaint, in that these acts or omissions would have given rise to a cause of action against them and in favor of Claimant, independent of Gov. Code § 815.2.

Further, pursuant to Gov. Code § 820, the tortfeasors are liable for injuries caused by their acts or omissions to the same extent as a private person. Claimant further alleges that the individual tortfeasors caused their injuries, as set forth herein, and are therefore liable to Claimant for damages arising out of those injuries as authorized by Gov. Code § 820.

12. Witnesses to damages or injury:

Assistant Sheriff Brendan Corbett
Captain Matthew Vander Horck
Captain Erick S. Kim
Captain Jason Wholak
Captain Whoolum
Lieutenant Jaime Alvarez
Lieutenant J. Azteca
Lieutenant Moore

Sergeant G. Alvarez.
Deputy Estrada (MCJ Training Office)



Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Re: Sergeant Michael Frazier - Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

Editors Knock LA <editors@knock.la>

Thu, Jul 22, 2021 at 12:01 PM

To: Lucia Nishizawa-Rodriguez <lnr@romerolaw.com>

Cc: Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>, Jennifer Sandoval <js@romerolaw.com>

Hi Lucia,

Thanks for your patience. As a volunteer organization, it can sometimes take us a while to respond to all of our correspondence. Regarding Mr. Romero's letter, it seems that he takes issue with our inclusion of Sergeant Frazier in the database we collated of known associates of deputy gang in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

It is unclear, however, if Mr. Romero has read "[The Perfect Breeding Ground](#)," Part 7 of Cerise Castle's series. Here's the relevant passage:

"In August 2008, Deputy Juan Abel Escalante, who worked at Men's Central Jail, was killed by [members](#) of the [Avenues](#) street gang in a [reported case of mistaken identity](#). Following Escalante's death, deputies at MCJ began beating and threatening to kill incarcerated Latinos, because they (incorrectly) believed one of them put a hit out on the deputy, [according to court documents](#). Following a severe attack on an incarcerated man, inmates refused to leave their cells. Body camera footage [obtained by ABC](#) shows Lieutenant Christopher Blasnek, a supervisor at the jail, briefing a group of deputies including Justin Bravo, Enrique Cano, Alejandro Hernandez Castanon, Ivan Delatorre, Herman Delgado, J. Demoooy, Arthur Diaz Jr., Adolph Esqueda, **Michael Frazier**, Antonio Galindo, Armando Gonzalez, Nicholas Graham, Brendon Jackson, J. Hill, Mario Juarez, R. Langarcia, M. Lockhart, John McNicholas, Jose Mendoza, Anthony Montes, Matthew Nowotny, Blake Orlandos, R. Patterson, Jason Puga, Aaron Rivera, G. Rodriguez, Joseph Sanford, Matthew Thomas, Hector Vazquez, Kelley Washington, and Sergeant Michel McGrattan before they unleashed a merciless six-hour attack on the incarcerated men."

I've bolded Sergeant Frazier's name for ease of reading. Given the footage placing Sergeant Frazier at a briefing incipient to a brutal, hours-long attack on prisoners, we do not feel it is appropriate to adjust our coverage.

Thank you,

Liam Fitzpatrick
Editor | Knock LA

On Fri, May 28, 2021 at 4:17 PM Lucia Nishizawa-Rodriguez <lnr@romerolaw.com> wrote:

Please see the attached correspondence by Mr. Romero regarding the matter in the subject line.

Lucia Nishizawa-Rodriguez
Office Administrator
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Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Re: Sergeant Michael Frazier - Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Thu, Jul 22, 2021 at 12:17 PM

To: Editors Knock LA <editors@knock.la>

Cc: Lucia Nishizawa-Rodriguez <lnr@romerolaw.com>, Jennifer Sandoval <js@romerolaw.com>, Ted Wells <tw@romerolaw.com>, Ceri e Cattle <cerieca@tlegmail.com>

Bcc: [REDACTED]

This communication shall be deemed an admission that you have **zero factual basis** to state that Frazier is, to quote your reporting: "a gang associate of the 3000 Boys."

No corroboration, no vetting, no surprise. This is a textbook example they should teach to journalism students to illustrate what constitutes "a reckless disregard for the truth."

This discussion over the fact that I've dedicated my life to ending this criminal gang problem in the LASD and you're jeopardizing the whole thing with your false reporting... so that the Sheriff can point it out and undermine all of our credibility based upon your total lack thereof. Despite your best intentions, your actions and inactions are materially advancing the interests of racist Deputy gangs in this Department, along with their enablers. Your total failure to engage in meaningful editorial control such as requiring corroboration or vetting have resulted in this predictable and unavoidable result.

 Alan Romero
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[Quoted text hidden]



Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Statement RE Gonzalez Case

Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Fri, Nov 5, 2021 at 4:47 PM

To: liam@knock.la

Cc: Ted Wells <esw@romerolaw.com>, Luke Rowe <ler@romerolaw.com>, Angela Xie <yx@romerolaw.com>, Jennifer Sandoval j @romerolaw.com , Regan Quilling rcq@romerolaw.com , Camilla Manciatì cm@romerolaw.com

Sorry, we're not willing to give any statement to knock.la until you remove the false reporting that hero whistleblower Sgt. Michael Frazier is a member of a deputy gang in the purported "LASD Gang Database." See the attached correspondence of earlier this year.

I will, however, provide you with the statement we gave to USA Today, the Daily Journal, and the LA Times:

"The judge granted Summary Judgment and dismissed Deputy Gonzalez's case on the basis that there was not a single triable issue of fact. This is not the case, and we are highly confident that the Court of Appeals will reverse and allow discovery into the deputy gang that Gonzalez blew the whistle on. The judge refused to permit discovery with respect to The Executioners gang, which along with his ruling dismissing the case, constituted a cover-up of murders of young men of color in Compton and other areas where deputy gangs have run slipshod. It is sad that Deputy Gonzalez served his country as a combat Marine, yet his case found itself in a courtroom where his right to discovery and to have his case heard at trial were taken away by a judge who felt that covering up violence and gang activity by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department was more important than guaranteeing the rights of a hero whistleblower who had the courage to stand up to his own Department."

Further, I will be making a lengthy statement tomorrow on our firm YouTube channel.

 Alan Romero
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 **21 05 27 Frazier KnockLA Letter pdf**
431K



Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Statement RE Gonzalez Case

Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Fri, Nov 5, 2021 at 4:49 PM

To: liam@knock.la

Cc: Ted Wells <esw@romerolaw.com>, Luke Rowe <ler@romerolaw.com>, Angela Xie <yx@romerolaw.com>, Jennifer Sandoval j_sandoval@romerolaw.com, Regan Quilling rcq@romerolaw.com, Camilla Manciatelli cm@romerolaw.com

Also, the entirety of the circumstances of the dismissal are laid out in the attached declaration which I filed with the court.

Alan Romero
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21-10-05 Gonzalez - Declaration of AJR In Response to OSC.pdf

302K



Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Statement RE Gonzalez Case

Liam Fitzpatrick <liam@knock.la>
To: Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 11:53 AM

Hi Alan,

Thanks so much for sending along these files, this is super helpful! I regret to inform you that, after consulting with our legal counsel and going over the details of Sgt. Frazier's case, we were unable to conclude that he was in no way associated with the Executioners at this time. That said, if you'd like to set up a time to discuss the case further discuss the ca e, I'd be happy to bring up that po ibility to our editorial team and our lawyer

Best,

[Quoted text hidden]



Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Statement RE Gonzalez Case

Liam Fitzpatrick <liam@knock.la>
To: Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 11:56 AM

Apologies it's been a long week, I mistyped. I meant to say that we were unable to conclude he was in no way associated with the 3000 boy , not the E ecutioner

[Quoted text hidden]



Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Statement RE Gonzalez Case

Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>
To: Liam Fitzpatrick <liam@knock.la>
Cc: Ted Wells <esw@romerolaw.com>, Jennifer Sandoval <js@romerolaw.com>
Bcc: [REDACTED]

Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 12:30 PM

Liam:

" we were unable to conclude he was in no way associated with the 3000 boys"

It's your job to verify and prove that he was associated with the 3000 Boys, not some innocent person's job to prove they're innocent before you print unverified, false allegations. I would have thought they would have taught you that in J school in your ethics class. Sad. I'll be doing a press conference about your poor, unverified reporting early next year with Mr Frazier I'll be sure you get an invite

Alan Romero
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Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Statement RE Gonzalez Case

Liam Fitzpatrick <liam@knock.la>

Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 12:51 PM

To: Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Cc: Ted Wells <esw@romerolaw.com>, Jennifer Sandoval <js@romerolaw.com>

Alan,

I should have phrased that sentence in a more active way. In the course of the investigation, we found a number of data points, including video evidence of a preparatory meeting which preceded the brutal beating of inmates by members of the 3K boy a well a court document from the following ca e which e plicitly mention both deputy gang generally and the 3K boys specifically, which confirmed to our editorial standards that Sgt Frazier was, at the very least, at one time associated with members of the 3K Boys.

I believe we are all intere ted in the ame goal of uncovering corruption in the LASD If there are e tenuating circumstances or evidence you can provide us that confirm Sgt. Frazier was not, in fact, associated with that deputy gang, we would of course be interested in seeing that. We look forward to continuing this discussion with you, and appreciate the work you're doing in representing LASD whistleblowers.

Thank you,

[Quoted text hidden]



Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Statement RE Gonzalez Case

Alan Romero <ajr@romerolaw.com>

Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 12:56 PM

To: Liam Fitzpatrick <liam@knock.la>

Cc: Ted Wells <esw@romerolaw.com>, Jennifer Sandoval <js@romerolaw.com>

Bcc [REDACTED]

You are actually harming the whistleblowers, as the Sheriff is right that you're publishing false information. It's disgusting that you have no editorial standards, and I plan to call you out and let everyone know that the whistleblowers, as a group, support Sgt. Frazier and ask that the reporting on your website be given ZERO credibility moving forward.

Now do me a favor and never contact my office again. Your website is spreading lies, and I am going to make sure that everyone knows.

Bye bye

Alan Romero
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