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DA's Cold Case Unit Work Leads to NY Capture of 1988 Murder Fugitive

Houston, Tx – The Harris County District Attorney's Office (DAO) filed extradition papers Friday on a 1988 murder fugitive captured through the work of the DAO's Cold Case/Fugitive Apprehension Section, District Attorney Patricia Lykos announced.

Theodore Emerson Dominguez, now 57, had been sought by authorities after he appeared for his Harris County murder trial on Aug. 30, 1989 – then vanished from the courtroom before it began. FBI agents acted on information developed by the District Attorney's Fugitive Apprehension Section to arrest him Thursday, as he arrived at his workplace in Brooklyn.

The auto mechanic is accused of fatally stabbing Camilo Sanchez, 24, after the two argued over a woman. Sanchez was killed at an apartment complex in the 16500 block of Loch Katrine on Nov. 12, 1988.

District Attorney Lykos took office in 2009 and established the special unit to review and investigate several hundred murder cases – many of them decades old -- in which the defendants had never been arrested, or had fled prior to trial.

Section Chief Russel Turbeville had Investigator Chuck Lowery research the Dominguez file in August. He used sophisticated new computer technology and databases to trace acquaintances and relatives of the fugitive. Then he focused on other names currently associated with them. That trail took him electronically to the New York area and driver's license records there, where Lowery discovered that Dominguez had apparently been using an alias for years.

"Lowery did a masterful job of applying modern, innovative techniques in tracing this fugitive," Turbeville said. "It is amazing the results he gets through tenacity and sheer persistence."

Lykos praised the cooperation of the FBI and other agencies involved. She noted that Dominguez is the 18th defendant that the Fugitive Apprehension Section has located, arrested or returned through extradition since she established the unit.

"These are veteran law enforcement investigators who have the experience, the street savvy and sophisticated cyberspace tools to track down these fugitives," Lykos said. "It doesn't matter how long they evaded the law in the past, these professionals are hunting them down and bringing them to justice – and Chuck Lowery is phenomenal."

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