25 years later, inmate returns to real world

Tucson woman got life sentence for murder

Lauren Castillo
Arizona Republic
USA TODAY NETWORK

On the night of Aug. 24, 1994, Chantey Cox, 17, pulled up next to a vehicle full of people at a traffic light in Tucson. Veronica Torres, 14, was among the five teenage passengers inside Cox's vehicle.

Torres crawled over a 13-year-old in the backseat to lean out the window while her friends screamed, "Blast them, blast them. Do what you have to do!"

She pointed a .25-caliber handgun at them, blast them, blast them. Do what you have to do!" Torres was 16 when she was sent-enced, Torres apologized.

I'm sorry for what I did, "she stat-ed. "I didn't just kill a young daughter. I lost a best friend."

The Republic reached out to the family's lawyers for comment for this story. The family chose to not respond.

Growing up, Torres never thought

She pointed a .25-caliber handgun at them, blast them, blast them. Do what you have to do!

The family's lawyer described how she moved her family out of state after the shooting in fear of retaliation from gangs. "No one knows what our family went through," she wrote. "I didn't just lose a young daughter. I lost a best friend."

Foirence, a young mom, was inside the vehicle with her 26-month-old son and her teenage sister. Skiki Torres held her dying sister in her arms, according to a 1994 report by The Arizona Republic. "My life and my family's life has changed forever," Skiki wrote to the court during Torres' sentencing.

Monica loved to write poetry and was looking forward to a happy future with her grandmother.

In a statement to the court in 1994, Torres's mother described how she moved her family out of state after the shooting in four of retaliation from gangs.

"No one knows what our family went through," she wrote. "I didn't just lose a young daughter. I lost a best friend."

On that day in 1994, people in both communities were arm-ered. "At the time, I didn't know what I was doing," Torres told the court during Torres' sentencing.

Perez is looking forward to a happy future with his grandmother.

The resignation, first reported by political-news website "Bloomberg" and confirmed by Sen. Doug Ducey's office, comes after Rep. Michelle IIah, R-Phoenix, "determined that the current structure of the agency is no longer sustainable," according to the Arizona State Department of Administrat-ion.

Until told The Arizona Republic that concerns from schools about agency delays and a scathing audit released in June prompted the proposal.

"The week before session started, a lot of these things came up," she said. "A lot of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle were saying, 'Why would we put more money in a system that is not being efficient?'"

Andy Tobin was appointed interim director of the agency, which also leads

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School Facilities Board chief quits; ax hangs over agency

Lily Altavena
Arizona Republic
USA TODAY NETWORK

Paul Bakalis resigned this week from his post leading Arizona's School Facilities Board, the state agency charged with doling out more than $8.8 billion every year to repair aging district schools and construct new schools.

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