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Hicks Proposed for Release Today By Parole Board

Hicks expected to join new generation supporting the TKF mission

(San Luis Obispo, Calif.) – After serving 23 years incarcerated in California prisons for the 1995 murder of 20-year-old Tariq Khamisa, Tony Hicks, 38, was proposed for release at his parole suitability hearing today.

The parole hearing took place at the California Men’s Colony at San Luis Obispo, where Hicks has been serving his sentence for the last two years.

Proposed decisions become final within 120 days from the date of the parole hearing. The decision is then subject to review by the governor. Governor-elect Gavin Newsom will have 30 days to review the decision. He can allow it, reverse it or refer the decision to the full board to review. During the 120 days following a parole hearing, the audio recording of the hearing will be transcribed and the decision will be subject to review by the board’s legal office.

Attending the parole hearing and arguing in favor of his release were the victim’s father, Azim Khamisa, and the victim’s sister, Tasreen Khamisa. In the wake of the murder, Azim Khamisa founded the Tariq Khamisa Foundation (TKF) and reached out to Tony’s grandfather, Ples Felix, in the spirit of forgiveness. Both families and the Foundation have pledged their support for Hicks including a role working with the Foundation.

“We are thrilled. Tony has worked hard for this. He earned it,” said Azim Khamisa. “Now, we have the opportunity to bring Tony into the Foundation. Because he can tell his powerful story firsthand, he will save the lives of thousands of children,” said Khamisa. “We urge the governor to approve his release. If others would like to join us in this endeavor, they can use #deargovernor and place a message on social media.”

Hicks has earned a GED and college credits toward an associate’s degree, which he intends to pursue upon release. While incarcerated, Hicks has been writing a blog for TKF’s website, answering student questions. [Read the blog here.](#)

Khamisa thanked the San Diego District Attorney’s office including District Attorney Summer Stephan and Deputy District Attorney Richard Sachs, chief of the ‘Lifer Hearing

Unit', for working with his family and the Foundation to keep them informed throughout the parole hearing process.

TKF has focused its attention from the very beginning on the same age group Tony Hicks fell in as a 14-year-old gang member when he shot and killed Tariq Khamisa. TKF has provided mentoring to 2,400 students and stands ready to help more.

In addition to personal mentoring youth most at-risk, TKF has connected with over 500,000 youth in communities across San Diego County since its founding. Changing the lives of young people by instilling hope and empowering them to make positive choices is what TKF stands for.

Among the youth served by TKF since 1995, 97 percent of the participants are ethnic minorities; 89 percent have disciplinary problems, 74 percent have academic problems, 38 percent are truant, and 32 percent have at least one incarcerated family member.

"Sadly, the need has not diminished. If anything it seems greater than ever in our troubled society," said Khamisa.

For more information about the Tariq Khamisa Foundation, visit <https://tkf.org>