

Potentially Preventable Tragedies in Orange County

Fullerton, Orange, CA

On July 5, 2011, 37-year-old Kelly Thomas was placed on life support after an **altercation with members of the Fullerton Police Department**. Thomas died five days later. Thomas' father said his son was homeless and **had a history of mental illness**. The family had an order of protection because they could not get the mental health system to treat Kelly.

Santa Margarita, Orange, CA

On December 25, 2010, 20-year-old **Andrew Wesley Downs fatally shot two sisters** at Santa Margarita Ranch. Downs, who was **diagnosed with schizophrenia** at the age of 15, periodically stopped taking his medication in the year prior to the killings. He had gone missing a month before the homicides. Downs was arrested after a 10-hour manhunt for the killings while attempting to beat a family friend, Glen Johnson, to death with a wrench in Atascadero. Downs had been arrested earlier in the year and evaluated for his mental stability.

Garden Grove, Orange, CA

On December 21, 2008, 30-year-old Richard Lam Nguyen was arrested after he called police and said he **killed his mother**, 71-year-old Nuong Thu Nguyen by strangling her to death. He said he then wandered the streets all night before coming home the next day. Police and paramedics responded and found Nuong Nguyen's body inside her home. Relatives told the judge that Richard Nguyen had a long history of mental illness, including **schizophrenia**.

Westminster, Orange, CA

On the morning of November 5, 2005, Daniel Ashworth shot his brother-in-law, Troy Moore in the back. When Moore ran outside, Ashworth shot him again. Westminster police arrived at the Village Greens complex and found Ashworth with the shotgun in hand and ordered him to drop the weapon. He aimed the gun at police. Several officers then shot him multiple times. Ashworth's mother said that Ashworth diagnosed as paranoid schizophrenic, was locked in a tug of war with the disease for much of his adult life. She blamed the mental illness for the events leading to her son's death Saturday.

Fountain Valley, Orange, CA

On Jan. 5, 2005, William Marrufo attacked and killed Teresa Marrufo, 58, with a meat cleaver in the driveway of their Fountain Valley home. Defense attorney Dennis O'Connell argued that Marrufo is bipolar and hallucinated that his mother was the devil.

Huntington Beach, Orange, CA

A brief standoff with police on July 3, 2004 ended when officers shot and killed Steve Hills in Downtown Huntington Beach, CA. Hills, 43, aimed a replica handgun at officers and threatened to kill himself and them, officials said. Hills had called police on his cell phone and told a 911 operator, he planned to kill himself or a police officer. Officers arrived minutes later. Hills suffered from bipolar disorder and had been released from Huntington Beach Hospital that morning. He was admitted after he attempted suicide on June 30, 2004.

Irvine, Orange, CA

Joseph Hunter Parker, armed with a samurai-style sword was shot and killed by police after he slashed and killed two former co-workers and wounded three other people at an Irvine supermarket where he used to bag groceries. The 30-year-old man confronted an officer

before fellow officers shot him. Parker had been diagnosed as schizophrenic, said his mother, Susan Davis, and often did not take his medication. "He said voices were telling him to do bad things," Davis said. Previously, Parker was twice detained by Orange, CA police for psychological evaluation and was hospitalized in September 2002 at his own request.

Baker Canyon, Orange, CA

Henry Lee Brown, a man with schizophrenia and a long history of arrests and hospitalizations, was shot and killed by police on June 12, 2004 after a four-hour standoff with officers that left three others wounded, including two deputies. Brown, 52, hunkered down in Baker Canyon with a .22-caliber rifle and shot it out with officers. Brown drifted across the country for about 20 years, living in homeless shelters and serving jail time in mental hospitals for bizarre crimes that grew increasingly violent. His mother, Esther Archie, said voices would tell Brown where to go. During these trips, he would stop taking medication for schizophrenia. "If he takes his medications, he's fine", said Paul Jackson, Brown's 26-year-old son. "When he doesn't, he's in relapse, and he just gets up and vanishes."

Garden Grove, Orange, CA

Adam Tran, diagnosed with schizophrenia, drastically reduced his dosage of antipsychotic drugs after his mother told him to look to God to silence voices in his head in the months before he murdered Vinh Truong on June 11, 2002. Truong, 26, a college student on summer break, was talking on a cell phone at the Garden Grove, CA, apartment complex where both his family and Tran lived when Tran stabbed him from behind. When police arrived, Tran told them that he did it. A year prior, Tran was living with siblings and was taking his medication and appeared to have stabilized. He then moved in with his mother and, at her suggestion, reduced his medication to 5 mg of Haldol, which was not enough to control his symptoms. A month before the murder, Tran's mother moved out of their apartment after Tran went knocking on a neighbor's door with a knife in hand, asking why they wanted to kill him.

Laguna Hills, Orange, CA

On July 30, 2001, Christopher Charles Hearn, 20, stabbed his next-door neighbor to death in Laguna Hills, CA. Hearn told police that he was outside his family's home when he grabbed a large knife from his truck, then asked Ken Chiu, 17, for a cigarette. Hearn led Chiu to his back yard, and when they finished smoking and Chiu tried to leave, Hearn stabbed him. Hearn is schizophrenic and can neither hear nor speak, pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity. On September 25, 2003, Superior Court Judge Kazuharu Makino ruled that Hearn was legally insane and could not tell right from wrong when he attacked Chiu.

Orange, CA

Johnny Humbert sliced his wife's neck In February 2000. Both Humbert and his wife, Christine Humbert, suffered from mental illness and Humbert had just started taking a new prescription medication for depression several weeks before the February 11th attack on his wife. He was arrested for the attack, charged with attempted murder and placed on a suicide watch at Orange County Jail. He was taken off the Prozac initially prescribed to him and placed on a mood stabilizer there. Subsequent history: Johnny Humbert, 52, took his own life by stepping into the path of a Metrolink train in Anaheim, California in June 2000.