

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Three Family Members Convicted of Animal Abuse**  
*spcaLA investigation leads to animal cruelty plea*

**Los Angeles, CA** – A Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (spcaLA) investigation and supporting evidence led to animal cruelty convictions against Sergio Amezcua, Guadalupe Amezcua and Maria Amezcua of Los Angeles, after they willfully and maliciously neglected Joni, a young Husky mix dog.

When spcaLA Humane Officers first encountered Joni, she was half-dead. Suffering from malnourishment, and multiple infestations, she also had a gaping, infected wound on her head so deep her skull was visible. She had been denied veterinary care, adequate food and water for months. Veterinarians confirmed, had spcaLA not removed Joni from the Amezcuas' care, she would have suffered a slow, painful death.

"What is astounding is Joni's resilience," said Madeline Bernstein, spcaLA President. "She not only recovered, but thrived in our care. She even went on to work with kids at our *Friends for Life Summer Camp*."

Joni was a guest of spcaLA for 8 ½ months, during which time spcaLA staff and volunteers treated her wound and helped her recover mentally from the abuse she suffered. Terror, scabs and infections gave way to a sweet, beautiful cream-colored dog with captivating eyes and a loving disposition.

Today, Joni is living in a happy home and enjoys going for runs on the beach with her new family.

Sergio, Guadalupe and Maria Amezcua were convicted of misdemeanor violations of PC 597b and each was sentenced to 36 months probation, 150 hours of community service, 16 sessions of 597h counseling and search & seizure conditions. Additionally, none of the three may own any animal for 5 years.

*For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Ana Bustilloz at 323-730-5300 x252, cell 323-707-1271 or [abustilloz@spcaLA.com](mailto:abustilloz@spcaLA.com). Before and after pictures are available.*

Since 1877, spcaLA has been the premiere independent, nonprofit animal welfare organization serving Southern California. There is no national SPCA, parent organization, or umbrella group that provides financial support to spcaLA. Donations run programs and services including Cruelty Investigation, Disaster Animal Response Team, Humane Education, and a variety of shelter services.

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