

El Dorado Beach beating case ends with 18-month prison term

U.S. District Court Judge John Mendez sentenced a Fairfield couple on June 30 for their roles in a July 2007 beating in South Lake Tahoe of an American citizen who is originally from India.

Joseph Silva, 56, and his wife, Georgia Silva, 52, will be spending 18 months in prison and three years of supervised released.

At the March trial the jury heard that the victim was attempting to enjoy El Dorado Beach when the Silvas confronted and attacked him. The evidence showed that Georgia Silva initially hurled derogatory racial and ethnic slurs at the victim and his then girlfriend. When the victim called the police, Georgia Silva assaulted the victim, knocking him to the ground. At the trial, the jury heard a recording of the call made by the victim to the police and statements the Silvas were making to the victim.

After knocking the victim to the ground, and while Georgia Silva was on top of the victim, her husband kicked the victim in the head. The attack caused fractures to bones in the victim's face and he was transported by ambulance to a local hospital. Witnesses to the incident recounted that Georgia Silva also insulted and attempt to spit upon another man of Indian descent.

"This case demonstrates that hate-motivated violence has no place in 21st century America, and such crimes will be vigorously prosecuted and punished," Thomas E. Perez, assistant attorney general for the Civil Rights Division, said in a press release. "Americans of all races, colors, and

ethnicities should feel free to use public parks and facilities without fear of intimidation and violence.”

The case was investigated by FBI Special Agent Chris Campion, with the assistance of Special Agent Brad Bilderback. Officer Rhett Gann of the South Lake Tahoe Police Department also assisted in the investigation and testified at the trial.