

## Man sentenced in smuggling case

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### Document Text

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A Mexican field worker was sentenced to three years and 10 months in prison yesterday in a smuggling charge that involved a wrong-way collision on Interstate 8 that took the lives of six people.

Alfredo Alvarez Coronado, 25, has admitted he was one of the guides who led 23 immigrants across the border and into a waiting van.

After sideswiping two cars on the freeway, the van crashed into a sport utility vehicle driven by Larry S. Baca, 50, a New Mexico resident. Baca died at the scene. Five people in the van -- four from Mexico and one from Brazil -- also died.

The June 24 crash near Pine Valley was part of a rash of incidents involving smugglers speeding on the wrong side of the road, often with their vehicles' headlights off.

Alvarez, who has scars on his face from the wreck, is the only smuggler charged in the crash. The van's driver was one of the six who died.

U.S. District Judge Jeffrey Miller said he decided to sentence Alvarez to more than three years in prison because of the deadly crash.

"It's a tragic, tragic case," he said. "Many people lost their lives."

According to prosecutors, Alvarez had worked for the smuggling organization for more than a month and had a key role in moving immigrants across the border.

Federal prosecutor Sherri Walker Hobson said Alvarez knew the trip was risky but did nothing to stop the driver from driving the van on the wrong side of the road.

Michael Crowley, Alvarez's defense attorney, urged the judge to sentence his client to less time. He described his client as a minor player who only agreed to be a guide because he was working off his own smuggling fee.

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### Abstract (Document Summary)

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