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JOINT NEWS RELEASE

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MAN CONVICTED IN 2001 COLD CASE SEXUAL ASSAULT

A man charged in connection with a 2001 sexual assault has been found guilty by a Denver jury; the result of work by Denver's Cold Case Project.

Francisco Charles (aka Francisco Hernandez) (dob: 05-30-79) was found guilty of two counts of *sexual assault* (F3) and one count of *second-degree kidnapping* (F2).

In the early morning hours of November 1, 2001 Charles attacked a 29-year-old woman as she was walking in the 1500 block of Broadway and sexually assaulted her at knifepoint. The victim was able to later run to a nearby taxi cab for help.

The case remained unsolved until it was reviewed as part of Denver's Cold Case Project and Charles was identified as a suspect through DNA. The Denver Police Department's Crime Lab was instrumental in the case, which was prosecuted by Chief Deputy DA Bonnie Wright-Benedetti and Deputy DA Andrew Baum.

Charles is scheduled to appear in Denver District Court on January 3, 2013; he faces an indeterminate sentence of up to life in prison.

The Cold Case DNA Project is an ongoing collaborative effort involving Denver Police detectives, the Denver Police Department Crime Lab and the Denver District Attorney's Office with grant funding through the National Institute of Justice.