

The Dallas Morning News

Five benefiting from donation of boy's organs

Dallas: Amid grief of triple murder-suicide, family thinks of others

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By SERGIO CHAPA / Al Día

NOTE: This relatives of this family had sealed themselves off from the media but I managed to get an interview through a mutual acquaintance. Instead of getting grisly details and rumors, we got exclusive photos and a story focused on their lives, accomplishments and life-saving donation. The family was pleased and asked for 25 copies of the paper.

The final act of 11-year-old Ricardo "Ricky" Alonso's life was to help save the lives of others.

The John F. Kennedy Learning Center fifth-grader, who was shot by his father Wednesday in a triple murder-suicide, had clung to life at Children's Medical Center Dallas until Thursday afternoon.

Family members said the boy's maternal relatives decided to donate all of his organs to turn their tragedy into something positive.

Another youngster and four adults received Ricky's organs.

"We feel proud to help somebody ... to know that someone will continue to live," said Ricky's paternal uncle Jose Faustino Alonso.

Ricky was the last survivor in his family of four. Police said his father, Jesus Alonso Sr., shot him, his 17-year-old brother, Jesus Alonso Jr., and their 34-year-old mother, Abigail Martinez Alonso.



Mr. Alonso, 37, then apparently turned the gun on himself in the family's Old East Dallas apartment.

Dallas police Sgt. Larry Lewis said Saturday that investigators suspect that marital problems may have been behind the shooting but noted that was only speculation.

"We may never know" a true motive, Sgt. Lewis said.

Pam Silvestri of the Southwest Transplant Alliance said Saturday that Ricky was a full organ donor whose heart saved the life of a 12-year-old boy. His liver, lungs, kidneys and pancreas went to at least four other people between the ages of 19 and 55.

"Families do tend to take comfort in making something good come out of something so horrible," Ms. Silvestri said. "It always amazes me that families dealing with such tragic circumstances can even consider the needs of others."

Despite the circumstances, Mr. Alonso said he hopes people remember his brother as a good person, a fanatic soccer player and a loving father whose children never lacked anything.

"If somebody asked him for a favor, he would be there for them," he said. "That's what he was known for."

Mr. Alonso said the family was busy finding ways to remember the family of four.

Two memorial services are planned today at Victory Outreach Center and Iglesia Mi Casa de Oración. A visitation, rosary and nondenominational service will be held Monday.

Members of Skyline High School's League of United Latin American Citizens Youth Council plan to help the family with funeral expenses and to make a donation to a memorial scholarship being established in the name of Jesus Jr., who was a member of the student group.

"This is how they want to remember him," said Ray De los Santos of LULAC's National Education Service. "He was such a vital part of the council. He was the one who made everyone laugh. He was there for them, and now they want to be there for him."

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SERVICE INFORMATION

The Alonso family will be cremated and their remains taken to Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. Relatives will hold two memorial services today and one public viewing, rosary and nondenominational service Monday.

Today's services are at 2 p.m. at Victory Outreach Center, 4320 Main St in Dallas, 214-546-6612; and 4:30 p.m. at Iglesia Mi Casa de Oración, 4536 Ash Lane in Dallas, 214-546-6612.

Visitation will begin at 1 p.m. Monday at Calvary Memorial Funeral Home, 8142 Lake June Road in Dallas, 214-398-7777. A rosary will follow from 7 to 8 p.m.