



Superior Court of California

COUNTY OF VENTURA
Hall of Justice
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

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Executive Officer/Clerk
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JUDGE REBECCA S. RILEY NAMED JUDGE OF THE YEAR

Judge Rebecca S. Riley has been named Judge of the Year by the Ventura County Trial Lawyers Association. The honor was bestowed at the association's 35th annual Judges' Night dinner on March 26, 2013.

The award recognizes exceptional judicial performance balanced with courtesy and compassion toward litigants and attorneys. Honorees are selected by a committee comprised of a diverse group of trial lawyers from the civil and criminal arenas.

Judge Riley has served as a judge for 17 years. She currently hears civil matters in Courtroom 40. Previously, she was assigned to the criminal department for many years. She is active in teaching judicial education courses statewide and serving on professional committees for the California Judicial Council and California Judges Association.

Judge Riley was appointed to the municipal court by Governor Pete Wilson in November 1995. She was elevated to the superior court by unification in June 1998.

Prior to her appointment to the bench, Judge Riley was a deputy district attorney for the Ventura County District Attorney's Office for 10 years. Before that, she practiced civil law for two years. She is also a former teacher and real estate broker. It was her interest in the legal aspects of real estate that led her to pursue a career in law.

Also honored at the event was retired Judge John J. Hunter, who passed away in 2007. A formal portrait was unveiled and presented to the court by the Ventura County Trial Lawyers Association. The association has selected one judge annually for the honor of a portrait since 1978.

Members of Judge Hunter's family were in attendance on his behalf. Appellate Court Justice Stephen Z. Perren and Retired Superior Court Judge Robert J. Soares were also present on behalf of Judge Hunter and the Hunter family.

Judge Hunter was appointed to the Municipal Court bench by Governor Ronald Reagan in May 1970. At the time, he was the youngest judge in California at the age of 34. He retired in 1992 after 22 years on the bench, but continued to serve on assignment for an additional 10 years.

His portrait and those of previous honorees can be viewed in Courtroom 22 on the second floor of the Hall of Justice in Ventura.

Presiding Judge Brian J. Back stated that: "Litigants and counsel want to present their case to a judge who possesses research skills, analytical skills, people skills and who obviously has a talent for appropriately dispensing justice. That judge would be compassionate yet firm, she would have the ability to make both the lightning-fast and long-enduring decisions on a consistent basis, she would be an excellent listener, and she would be smart. And it is certainly important for that judge to have a good sense of humor. That judge would be Rebecca Riley. Since Judge 'Becky' possesses all those skills and more, all of her colleagues on the bench are proud that she has received this well-deserved award."

"Those attorneys who did not have the opportunity to appear in front of Judge Hunter may not realize that much of what appears to be 'normal' process and procedure is actually the result of Judge Hunter's diligent and innovative work on behalf of the court many years ago. In addition to a long and distinguished career on the bench, the fruits of Judge John J. Hunter's efforts continue to benefit litigants today."

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