



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 COLLEEN TOY WHITE NAMED JUDGE OF THE YEAR

Judge Colleen Toy White has been named Judge of the Year by the Ventura County Trial Lawyers Association. The honor was bestowed at the association's 36th annual Judges' Night dinner on March 25, 2014.

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 committed to bettering the civil justice system, the lawyers who serve it, and the community it serves.

Judge White has served as a Ventura Superior Court judge for 19 years. She is a past Presiding Judge and Assistant Presiding Judge, and a former Supervising Judge of the Family Law Division.

Judge White was elected to the Superior Court bench in June 1994. She received a special appointment by Governor Wilson in November of that year allowing her to take the bench prior to the start of her term in January 1995.

Judge White has served on numerous state and local committees and task forces. She is the recipient of many awards for outstanding public service, leadership, and contributions to the legal system. Most recently, she was recognized by the Ventura County Mental Health Board for her leadership, service and dedication to the Mental Health Court, and by the Gold Coast Veterans Foundation for her service as presiding judge of the Veterans Court. Judge White has also been an instructor for several Southern California colleges.

Judge White initiated many of the Ventura Superior Court's specialty court programs. These include: Dependency Drug Court, which provides early intervention for newborns prenatally exposed to alcohol or drugs while strengthening the ability of families to care for their children; Elder Law Court, which uses a specialized approach to adjudicating complex elder abuse cases; Veterans Court, which hears criminal cases involving veterans who suffer from the effects of combat-related psychological injuries or substance abuse; and Community Intervention Court, which helps offenders who are repeatedly cited for vagrancy-related crimes to get into treatment programs and off living on the streets.

Judge White also initiated the Pro Per Clinic, the forerunner of the court's Family Law Self-Help Center, which assists litigants representing themselves in the family law courts.

Prior to being elected to the bench, Judge White was a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office for 18 years, 10 of which were in the position of Chief Assistant District Attorney, that agency's second highest position.

Judge White is a graduate of the Ventura College of Law. She currently hears criminal matters in Courtroom 37, in addition to several of the specialty court calendars.

Also honored at the event was retired Judge David W. Long. 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.

Judge Long served for many years as the Supervising Civil Judge, handling all Civil Mandatory Settlement Conferences. Prior to his retirement, he heard misdemeanor arraignments and criminal trials.

Judge Long was named Judge of the Year by the Ventura County Trial Lawyers Association in 2007, and received the Alternative Dispute Resolution Advocate of the Year award from the Ventura Center for Dispute Settlement in 2005.

Judge Long was appointed to the Municipal Court bench by Governor Pete Wilson in October 1995. He was elevated to the Superior Court bench by Governor Wilson two years later in November 1997. He retired on May 16, 2011, after more than 15 years on the bench as a Judge and two years as a Commissioner.

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

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