



# Superior Court of California

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

*Michael D. Planet*  
*Executive Officer/Clerk*  
*and Jury Commissioner*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **JUDGE COLLEEN TOY WHITE RECEIVES BENJAMIN J. ARANDA III ACCESS TO JUSTICE AWARD**

Ventura Superior Court Judge Colleen Toy White has been named as a recipient of the 2016 Aranda Access to Justice Award. The award honors a judge who has demonstrated a long-term commitment to improving access to our courts, and who has significantly improved access for low and moderate income Californians. It is named in honor of the late Judge Benjamin Aranda III, who was known for his tireless efforts to promote fairness and access in the courts.

Judge White will receive the award from California Supreme Court Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye at a special ceremony on August 25 in San Francisco.

The Aranda Access to Justice Award has been presented annually since 1999. It is co-sponsored by the California Judicial Council, the State Bar of California, and the California Judges Association, in association with the California Commission on Access to Justice.

Judge White is responsible for initiating 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 created the Mental Health Court in an effort to bring together law enforcement and our community mental health resources.

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.

Judge White has served as a Ventura Superior Court judge for 21 years. She is a past Presiding Judge and Assistant Presiding Judge, and a former Supervising Judge of the Family Law Division. In 2014, she was named Judge of the Year by the Ventura County Trial Lawyers Association.

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.

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 and domestic violence matters in Courtroom 37, in addition to several of the specialty court calendars that she created.

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