



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **JUDGE ANTHONY J. SABO HONORED BY VCTLA AS 2024 JUDGE OF THE YEAR**

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA  
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**Matthew P. Guasco**  
*Presiding Judge*

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**Kate Bieker**  
*Court Executive Officer,  
Clerk of the Court and  
Jury Commissioner*

VENTURA, CA — The Ventura County Trial Lawyers Association (VCTLA) have named Judge Anthony J. Sabo as Judge of the Year for 2024. The honor was bestowed at the Association's annual Judges' Night dinner on April 22, 2025, at the Courtyard Marriott in Oxnard.

Judge Sabo was elected as a Ventura Superior Court judge in June 2018 to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Brian Back. On October 11, 2018, Governor Edmund Brown, Jr., appointed Judge-elect Sabo to an interim judgeship at the Court, which allowed Judge Sabo to immediately perform his judicial duties.

Prior to Judge Sabo's appointment, he served as a Commissioner with the Ventura Superior Court beginning in May 2014, presiding over felony and misdemeanor trials and sentencings, as well as civil, probate and family law cases. Currently assigned to criminal trial Courtroom 46, Judge Sabo will assume the role of Supervising Judge of the Criminal Division on April 28, 2025.

Prior to his selection as Commissioner, Judge Sabo served as a Senior Deputy District Attorney at the Ventura County District Attorney's Office from 2008 to 2014, and as a Deputy Prosecutor in the Office of the Dearborn and Ohio County Prosecutor from 1997 to 2008. Simultaneously, he was the sole practitioner of his own law office from 1995 to 2008 representing clients in family, probate, and property disputes, as well as representing governmental agencies and corporations.

Judge Sabo earned his Juris Doctor degree from the University of North Dakota School of Law and his Bachelor of Arts degree from Indiana University, Bloomington.

## VCTLA PORTRAIT HONOREES

Also honored at the event were retired Ventura Superior Court judges, Hon. Patricia M. Murphy and Hon. Henry J. Walsh, who were selected as VCTLA's Portrait Honorees for 2024. Formal portraits of Judge Murphy and Judge Walsh were unveiled and presented to the Court during the ceremony.

### [HONORABLE PATRICIA M. MURPHY, Ret.:](#)

Judge Patricia M. Murphy was appointed as Judge of the Ventura Superior Court on March 9, 2006, by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, filling the vacancy created by the retirement of Hon. Roland Purnell. During her tenure with the Court, Judge Murphy was assigned to the Criminal Law Department at the Hall of Justice. She retired on July 1, 2024, after more than 18 years of dedicated service.

Before she joined the Court, Judge Murphy was a prosecutor with the Ventura County District Attorney's Office. She began her career as a Deputy District Attorney in 1987, advancing to the positions of Senior Attorney in the Major Crimes Unit, and Supervising Attorney in the Family Protection Unit. In 2002, she was appointed as the Chief Assistant District Attorney – the agency's second highest position – and held the position until her appointment to the bench.

During her judicial career, Judge Murphy received notable awards and honors including: the Ventura County Trial Lawyers Attorneys' Judge of the Year Award (2018) and the Knights of Columbus Council #750 Public Safety Award (2016). Judge Murphy was selected by the Judges of the Court to serve as Assistant Presiding Judge for 2015-2016 and Presiding Judge for 2017-2018.

Judge Murphy earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from California State University Northridge and her Juris Doctor degree from Southwestern University School of Law.

### [HONORABLE HENRY J. WALSH, Ret.:](#)

Judge Henry J. Walsh was appointed as Judge of the Ventura Superior Court in 1998 by Governor Pete Wilson, filling the vacancy created by the death of the Hon. Frederick A. Jones. During his tenure with the Court, Judge Walsh's judicial assignments included civil trials and family law. He retired on January 5, 2025, from the Court after almost 27 years of dedicated service.

Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Walsh was a civil litigation partner at the law firm of Lawler, Bonham, and Walsh beginning in 1985. He also worked as an attorney at Lawler and Ellis from 1980 to 1985 and for Kosmo, Walsh, and Cho from 1971 to 1980.

During his judicial career, Judge Walsh received notable awards and honors including: the Ventura County Trial Lawyers Attorneys' Judge of the Year Award (2002) and the Knights of Columbus Council #750 Public Safety Award (2012) in recognition of his contributions to the community. He served as the Presiding Judge of the Appellate Division, Supervising Civil Judge of the Ventura Superior Court, Chair of the Superior Court Jury/Grand Jury Committee, and Co-Chair of the Expedited Jury Trial Pilot Program.

Judge Walsh received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1965, Commission 2nd Lt. USAF from Stanford University in 1965 and earned his Juris Doctor degree from Loyola Law School in 1970. Judge Walsh served in the United States Air Force, achieving the rank of Second Lieutenant upon entering service in 1965.

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The portraits of Judge Murphy and Judge Walsh will be placed next to those of previous honorees in Courtroom 22 on the second floor of the Hall of Justice.

VCTLA has annually selected one or more judges for the portrait honor since 1978. The VCTLA Judge of the Year 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.

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