



Multi-Cultural Community Council

★ To Yolo County DA Jeff Reisig

September 25, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jeff Reisig
District Attorney

Jesse Ortiz
Chairperson

Carlos Matos
Co-Chairperson

Committee Members
Jeannette Ali

Alan Brownstein

Griselda Castro

Elizabeth Coté

Raul DeAnda

Diane Evans

Tim Fong

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Gary Sandy

Laura Valdes

Patty Wong

Justice Leadership Awards Recognize Those Who Promote Peace & Diversity

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On September 18, 2014, the Multi-Cultural Community Council ("MCCC") held its first annual Justice Leadership Awards Luncheon to recognize individuals or organizations who have successfully promoted multi-cultural relationships, peace and diversity in Yolo County.

Awards recognizing individuals and/or organizations were announced in five categories: Administration of Justice; Faith Based Communities; Public Schools; Human Services; and Community Engagement Volunteer. The recipients were as follows:

Administration of Justice:

Lt. Tom Waltz from the Davis Police Dept. was honored for his diverse involvement with his agency as well as the Yolo County Mental Health Board. He was given his award by MCCC Co-Chair, Carlos Matos, who explained that Lt. Waltz "has worked tirelessly to improve interactions between law enforcement and community members with mental illness."

Sr. Probation Officer Melissa Vega from the Yolo County Probation Dept. was recognized for her efforts in (RED) Reducing Ethnicity Disparities in at risk youth of color. She was given her award by MCCC member, Laura Valdes, who described how Ms. Vega "had gone above and beyond in her role as coordinator of this statewide effort in our community."

Faith Based Communities:

Pastor Bill Habicht from the Davis Community Church was recognized for, amongst other things, stepping up to help improve understanding of the needs of the homeless in the City of Davis. MCCC member Alan Brownstein stated that "Bill has worked with many programs and social justice initiatives in Davis and Yolo County

including the community courts program and a job training program for adults with disabilities."

Alexandra Lee-Jobe was recognized for her role in many multi-cultural events and for forming a multi-cultural leadership committee at her church, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis. MCCC member Diane Evans expressed her appreciation for the way that her efforts "unleashed the multi-cultural leadership in those around her."

Public Schools: This award went to the P.B.I.S. Program of Pioneer High School in Woodland. The program was brought to fruition by former PHS Principal, Kerry Callahan, who accepted the award along with the current PHS principal, Angelina Arias, and Associate Superintendent, Debra Calvin. The program, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support, has greatly improved academic performance and is engrained in the culture of PHS students. MCCC member Gary Sandy, the father of three PHS graduates, gave the award to Ms. Callahan and commended her for her efforts in the program and proclaimed that "Pioneer High School is nationally recognized for the extraordinary transformation," that was brought about by the PBIS Program.

Human Services: Irene Santiago, a long time employee of the West Sacramento Parks & Recreation Department, was recognized for her efforts in assisting senior citizens in need to find programs that help make their lives more comfortable. MCCC member Griselda Castro, who gave her the award, explained how she "exemplifies benevolence, heart-warming, hard work in her community."

Community Engagement Volunteer: Western Yolo Grange was the recipient of this award. On hand to receive the award was the Grange President Paul Muller and member Clarence Van Hook. For more than 100 years the Grange has served the area's local farmers. Of importance is an annual multi-cultural celebration, coordinated in part by Mr. Van Hook, that is held during Black History Month. The award was given by MCCC member Patty Wong, who expressed her appreciation and described the mission of the group as "the epitome of diversity and inclusion in our county."

Yolo County's Multi-Cultural Community Council strives to enrich understanding of Yolo County's diverse population and to celebrate how cultural knowledge expands our ability to accept and appreciate differences. The MCCC was created by Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig, along with MCCC Chairperson Dr. Jesse Ortiz, and is comprised of individuals from throughout Yolo County. The MCCC acts as an advisory group to Reisig.

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