



Multi-Cultural Community Council

★ To Yolo County DA Jeff Reisig

Jeff Reisig
District Attorney

October 12, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DA's Multi-Cultural Community Council Honors Citizens

Carlos Matos
Chairperson

Contact: Jonathan Raven: jonathan.raven@yolocounty.org

Laura Valdes
Co-Chairperson

District Attorney Jeff Reisig's Multi-Cultural Community Council (MCCC) honored seven Yolo County citizens at the 5th annual MCCC awards luncheon which took place at the Yolo County's Atrium in Woodland on October 11, 2018.

Committee Members

Alan Brownstein

The awards luncheon focuses on recognizing individuals or organizations who promote multi-cultural relationships, acceptance and peace; forge diverse coalitions to assure ongoing community dialogue related to cultural awareness, the criminal justice system, and public safety; and ensure multi-cultural community participation in educational and informational programs related to accessing, understanding and providing input to the criminal justice system.

Kayton Carter

Hamza El-Nakhal

Rhea Gardner

Jeannie Johng-
Nishikawa

In his opening remarks Reisig stated that the MCCC was born 12 years ago from discussions with Yolo County Office of Education Superintendent Dr. Jesse Ortiz. They discussed how law enforcement could do a better job of working in the community by engaging people with diverse cultural backgrounds. The mission of the Yolo County's MCCC is 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 is made up of individuals from throughout Yolo County.

Eliana Kaimowitz

Jonathan Raven

Tessa Smith

MCCC member and Health and Human Services employee, Tessa Smith, presented the "Public Schools" award to Garth Lewis, who recently was elected Yolo County Office of Education Superintendent, after Dr. Ortiz announced his retirement. Lewis, among other accomplishments, has forged strong relationships with the Health and Human Services Agency, Probation and other county providers in pursuit of building a resilient Yolo community and promoting programs that support the diverse needs of our young people. Lewis, in accepting his award, stated that he was "honored to serve in the community which puts egos and mandates aside so we can better serve the youth."

Jenny Tan

Clarence Van Hook

Mikael Villalobos

MCCC member Eliana Kaimowitz, who works in Governor Jerry Brown's administration, presented the "Faith Based" award to Karen Shepard and John Katonah, on behalf of Janet Lane, of the Yolo Immigrant Interfaith Network (YIIN). YIIN provides educational, social and other support services to immigrants. YIIN volunteers spend time every week visiting youths in the Juvenile Detention Facility. Shepard told the audience that she often wonders whether she has done everything she can for the

young person while visiting. But she knows she did her best when the youth says “thank you so much for coming, are you coming back next week.”

Tessa Smith came back to the podium to honor Kara Hunter for the “Human Services” award. Hunter is the Executive Director of the Yolo Conflict Resolution Center (YCRC). YCRC consistently strives to empower, educate, and give voice to ethnically underserved individuals who participate in voluntary mediation and conflict resolution under restorative practice and principles. Hunter thanked the support of Yolo DA and law enforcement. “We appreciate the vulnerability and the effort to do something different,” said Hunter. She applauded District Attorney Reisig and the police agencies in Yolo County for being trailblazers in the law enforcement community in supporting restorative justice. UC Davis Professor Natalia Deeb-Sossa also was honored for her work in the “Human Services” category for her work with students in underserved populations and particularly for the children of migrant farmworkers. Deeb-Sossa was unable to attend the luncheon.

David and Anna-Marie Jung were presented the “Community Member/Volunteer” award by DA Victim Services Manager and MCCC Co-Chair, Laura Valdes. Jung’s ATA Martial Arts in West Sacramento is dedicated to empowerment of the individual and the greater community by the value-based training and growth focused mindset it provides in a martial arts setting. ATA serves people of all ages and backgrounds. In accepting the award, David Jung stated, “we not only stress and celebrate individuality, but also sameness as we all share so many common values.”

The last honoree was Trease Petersen who recently retired from the Davis Police Department. Chief Deputy District Attorney and MCCC member, Jonathan Raven, described how Petersen designed and started a restorative justice program for youths in Davis who had been arrested for crimes. Prior to her retirement, and with the program still in its infancy, Petersen was responsible for coordinating the successful resolution of 15 cases. Petersen said “I’m honored to be nominated and I feel blessed that Chief Pytel entrusted me with developing and implementing a restorative justice program for Davis youth.”

District Attorney Reisig closed out the event honoring MCCC member Carlos Matos for his many years of dedication and leadership as a member and chair of the MCCC. Matos is moving soon to be closer to his family. Both Matos and Reisig talked about meeting about 12 years ago to discuss Matos’ displeasure with Reisig’s policy on drug cases. Matos said Reisig listened to him and changed his office’s policy and for that, Reisig earned his respect and admiration. Reisig presented Matos with a Yolo DA hat with pink lettering in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Matos, said later he was very moved by the hat and will wear it proudly as his wife recently died of breast cancer.

###