



COUNTY OF YOLO
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Yolo County District Attorney's Office will hold a virtual town hall meeting focusing on DUI cases

Four DUI Convictions with High Blood Alcohol Content Highlight the Continued Commitment to Address Drunk Driving

(Woodland, CA) – October 6, 2022- The Yolo County District Attorney's Office is doubling down on its effort to address drunk driving in Yolo County. The recent cases of *People v. Tina Dejesus*, *People v. Joseph Ocegueda*, *People v. Jorge Mendez-Valladolid*, and *People v. Jose Hernandez-Ortiz* resulted in four Yolo County juries convicting these individuals of driving under the influence with extremely high blood alcohol contents of .195, .213., .30, and .33, respectively.

In both *Mendez-Valladolid* and *Ocegueda*, police responded to traffic collisions and found the defendants intoxicated. In *Dejesus*, a Good Samaritan saw a vehicle driving at varying speeds of 40-90 MPH, weaving between three lanes of traffic on highway 80, and running other cars off the road. The Good Samaritan followed the vehicle to a bar in West Sacramento until officers arrived on the scene.

The Yolo County District Attorney's office holds monthly virtual Commons town hall meetings. The next scheduled meeting will focus on DUI cases and will be held via zoom on October 11, 2022, from 3pm-4pm. For more information or to register, go to: <https://yoloda.org/commons-town-hall-meetings/>

According to Yolo County District Attorney's Commons Data Transparency portal (<https://www.measuresforjustice.org/commons/yoloda>), starting in 2020, DUI investigations referred to the District Attorney for from local police, CHP, and Sheriff, for criminal charges, have increased by 30%. The four recent jury trial convictions, as well as numerous other DUI's that have resulted in pleas, highlight a disturbing and troubling trend of DUIs with Blood Alcohol Contents (BAC's) vastly beyond the legal

limit of .08. This is significant not just because of a violation of the law, but because the .08 limit is the limit at which a person is considered by most experts to be impaired. A BAC that is double or triple this rate is an exponentially greater danger to other drivers on the road and the community as a whole. While thankfully none of these cases resulted in serious injuries or death, this is a result of fortunate circumstances, not a lack of risk.

In response to this trend, the Office of the District Attorney wishes to remind drivers and the community about the following information regarding DUIs:

- **There are options available to get home besides driving.** In today's age, with various alternative transportation options through ride services and apps, there is absolutely no excuse to drive when you are under the influence of a drug or alcoholic beverage. Many bars/saloons encourage you to leave your vehicle overnight, rather than drink and drive.
- **Zero Tolerance.** DUI's are recognized as a constant and ever-present threat to the community. As such, they are aggressively investigated by police departments and aggressively prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office.
- **Getting a DUI is expensive.** Attorney's fees for DUI cases can run as high as \$5,000, with total costs being as high as \$10-\$12,000 depending on the case. For defendants who cannot afford private representation, and are represented by a court appointed attorney in these cases, are still subject to a minimum fine of \$1933, which does not include the cost of (programs, alcohol monitoring or deterrent devices.) This amount also does not include restitution to victims for injuries suffered or damage to their vehicles if there is a collision.
- **Friends/family should not let friends/family Drink and Drive.** DUIs are a danger to the driver as well as the community. Avoid having friends or family members risk their lives or risk being arrested by preventing them from getting behind the wheel if they have been drinking.
- **Report Drunk Drivers.** The community is the greatest asset available to identify drunk drivers. If you see someone who is intoxicated getting behind the wheel of a vehicle, or see a vehicle behaving erratically, call 911 and report the vehicle as a suspected drunk driver. You may very well prevent a collision or save a life.

District Attorney Jeff Reisig stated, "Drunk drivers present a danger to everyone in the community, including the drivers themselves. The data on this issue is not disputed. Every year thousands of lives are lost or impacted across the country due to someone making the careless decision to drive while intoxicated."

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