



# CITATIONS

MAY - TWO THOUSAND TWENTY THREE

## VCTLA HONORS VC JUDGES

by Stephanie Johnson

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L to R: **Stephanie Johnson** (no relation) accepting **Judge Joann Johnson's** award; **Judge Steven Hintz, ret.;** **Judge Roger Lund,** Kevin White, accepting the portrait on behalf of **Judge Colleen Toy White.**

BRIAN C. ISRAEL  
 LOU VIGORITA  
 ALEX TRON  
 PANDA KROLL  
 LAURA WITHROW

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by *Brian C. Israel*

The month of May is upon us. Locally, the weather will bring a marine layer that gives us “May gray.” This marine layer comes and goes but inevitably leads us to “June gloom.” Growing up, I always enjoyed this time of year as it was all too easy to throw on a sweatshirt and pair of jeans in true comfort. Style is sometimes overrated.

May is also the month where students begin getting excited as the end of the school year comes into focus. In turn, parents wonder how to keep their kids busy and out of trouble during the impending summer.

Speaking of trouble, this month of May I am able to use my little space here to highlight some of the work of the Ventura County Public Defender's Office. For those who are indigent or are unable to hire a private defense lawyer, for various reasons, the Public Defender's Office is charged with representing the Defendants' interests as cases wind their way through the judicial system. But, that is not necessarily all they do. They also offer a wide-variety of services and programs that are integral and beneficial to our community.

The Public Defender's Office is headed by **Claudia Bautista**. A colleague described her as “fearless in her pursuit of defending constitutional rights,” and her vision and leadership have had a trickle-down effect on others in the Office of the Public Defender. You can learn more about Claudia by reading the March 2021 issue of CITATIONS where attorney **Kathleen Smith** wrote a wonderful article following Claudia's appointment as Public Defender. This article is available through the VCBA website.

Before delving into the wide-ranging things the Public Defender's Office does, it should also be noted how the office has grown to be more efficient and dynamic to better serve its clients. Deputy public defender **Matthew Nemerson**, who is a part of the felony 1 team at the Ventura County Public Defender's Office, returned to Ventura County in November 2022 after practicing elsewhere and was impressed by the integration of technology in the Public Defender's Office. He noted how

he is able to access files electronically and partake in video conferences with clients who are in custody. This is not only “convenient,” but it “has led to better attorney-client relationships.”

Mr. Nemerson also noted how the integrated electronic system allows law enforcement, probation, and the Public Defender's Office to upload documents for easy access rather than use a system that relies on paper copies and email. This also simplifies the retrieval of discovery and other documents. This streamlining allows the 60+ attorneys and 100+ full-time employees to better serve clients.

As an attorney outside the criminal bubble, I have limited interactions with public defenders and district attorneys alike and, at times, it seems like a completely different world, even though we all practice law. It has been refreshing to learn more about the attorneys and issues in this public sector that employees, clients, and outsiders alike often refer to as the “PD's office.”

At the Probate Court located at the Juvenile Justice Center in Oxnard, public defenders **Marie Meth** and **William Lenehan** are assigned a bevy of cases that are usually not tied to crime. Some of their caseload is in the area of limited conservatorships where developmentally disabled individuals, by statute, are appointed an attorney to represent them. These individuals, who often obtain services through Tri-County Regional Center, are limited in their cognitive and physical abilities and would otherwise be potential targets for exploitation, whether financially or physically. To have an advocate like Lenehan or Meth can be vitally important in this arena.

The Public Defender's Office also takes part in specialty courts and programs that balance the need for treatment and appropriate punishment. Examples of these include veterans court, juvenile drug court, domestic violence court, homeless court, and mentally ill offender/diversion court. Many of these courts, per statute, require a nexus between the criminal offense charged and the related mental health issue. For

current or former members of the United State military, this may involve issues relating to post-traumatic stress-disorder or traumatic brain injury as a result of their service. Often, in conjunction with Ventura County Behavioral Health, the Court serves to achieve the best outcome for the Veteran.

A similar program exists in mental health diversion with deputy public defender **Margaret Manning** taking part as a primary attorney. The intent of this specialty court is to not criminalize mental health or perpetuate stigmas, but to hold the defendant accountable while following an appropriate course of action to try to better the outlook for the individual. Most Mental Health Diversion cases are heard in Courtroom 13 in front of **Judge Nancy Ayers**, though **Judges David Hirsch** and **Judge Rocky Baio** also hear some of these cases. Private criminal defense attorneys also represent clients in mental health diversion. VCBA recently hosted an MCLE with local attorneys **Doug Ridley** and **Danielle Tamir** leading that was very informative on the diversion program. **Mike Rodriguez** with VC Behavioral Health also helped lead the MCLE.

Deputy public defender Matthew Terry in his juvenile division assignment assists clients in a program called “Insights.” This is a dual diagnosis program for mental health/drug issues that involves participating in extra court dates, visits with the probation office, and connecting to other services in the community. In exchange, the juvenile can then have his or her record for the crime wiped and sealed which allows for a better future for the juvenile. Deputy public defender **Rod Kodman** helped create the program and Jenna Cameron at VC Behavioral Health is the clinic administrator who assists on the mental health aspect of the program. “Insights” and those involved have made an impact on juveniles who have successfully completed the program.

The job of Public Defender has been described as a thankless job. But, it is one that is both indispensable and vital to our republic. Sure that sounds like a grandiose statement, but the California and United

*Continued on page 15*

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A to Z Law is pleased to announce that Dennis P. McNulty and Mischa N. Barteau have joined the firm.

*Welcome Dennis and Mischa!*

**Dennis P. McNulty** has joined the firm as partner, focusing on real estate, commercial, business, and corporate transactions, as well as administrative law and the representation of special districts and agencies. A lifelong Ventura County resident, Dennis started his career with A to Z Law as an associate. His 25 years' experience and background in litigation give Dennis a valuable perspective and talent for managing inherent risks, resolving disputes and moving transactions forward.



Dennis may be reached at [dmcnulty@atozlaw.com](mailto:dmcnulty@atozlaw.com) / 805.988.9886



**Mischa N. Barteau** has joined the firm as an associate specializing in civil litigation, mediation, and negotiation. Mischa received her JD from Pepperdine University School of Law where she was a member of the Pepperdine Law Review and received her Master of Dispute Resolution from Pepperdine's Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution. Mischa's experience encompasses all aspects of civil litigation in state and federal courts, at the trial and appellate levels.

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## VCTLA HONORS VC JUDGES

*by Stephanie Johnson*

On March 28, the Ventura County Trial Lawyers Association continued its longstanding tradition of honoring Ventura County judges and other judicial officers at Judge's Night. Before more than 150 members of the bench and bar, the VCTLA awarded Judge of the Year for 2021 to **Hon. JoAnn Johnson** and Judge of the Year for 2022 to **Hon. Roger L. Lund**. VCTLA also unveiled formal portraits of **Hon. Steven Hintz** (ret.) and the late **Hon. Colleen Toy White**. The formal portraits will be placed in Courtroom 22. The event was hosted at the Courtyard Marriot Oxnard.



Photography credits to R. Scott Horn Photography and Video. Audio, visual, and technical support provided by Craig Bates of Telegenics, Inc.

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## VIEW FROM THE FRINGE

By Lou Vigorita

A few years ago, asked what she did at Legal Aid, the late **Carmen Ramirez** responded, "We help people with low income who have difficulties and problems with businesses, landlords, government agencies and each other". Today that still applies to YOUR Ventura County Legal Aid. I emphasize YOUR because it benefits friends, family members, clients, employees and anybody else having a hard time during these economic challenges. It is a place where they can receive legal help when they are unable to afford a private attorney. But it is also a place where YOU can volunteer your time and expertise under the umbrella of a nonprofit. More about these volunteer opportunities later, but for now know that we are operational in a more traditional way since the pandemic.

One aspect of VCLA is the walk-in clinics on the first and third Tuesdays of each month starting at 4:00 p.m. We try to stop taking clients after 5:30 p.m. (This is subject to change depending on the Government Center's requirements). Our location is the Law Library, adjacent to the courthouse on Victoria Avenue. Our website, [vclegalaid@org](mailto:vclegalaid@org), is a good place for anyone who needs legal

help to start. It is also a good place to make a monetary donation.

As incoming president for 2023 I want to first thank VCLA's immediate past president **Kevin Staker**, who stepped up when former president **Chris Beck** left to accept a position in Northern California. Kevin has always been there for us, spending countless hours in front and behind the scenes, filling in and carrying the weight. Thank you, Kevin! Our new officers you may know by reputation and community service already: treasurer **Tony Strauss** and secretary **Brad Marcus**. You deserve our appreciation, as do board members who graciously donate their time and energy not only as board members but as clinic volunteers: **Joseph L. Strohman, Dien Le, Laura Bartels, Glenn Campbell, Erik B. Feingold, Jodi L. Prior, Rabiah Rahman, Vanessa Valdez**, and our most recent appointee, **Paul Bujold**.

Our executive director and man who juggles so many things that I have a hard time writing his job description is **Cesar Libanati**. Our other attorney, who literally does everything else and is always good to call with an "out there" question is **Alfred Vargas**. Last but

certainly not least is the glue that keeps this sometimes not so smooth machine going is our coordinator, **Maritza Garcia**.

That's our lineup. We are people like you who make this program happen. For now, just know that there is a place that helps not only those on the "fringe" of society but also YOU. We can provide you with the opportunity to serve, volunteer, donate, refer or just ask a question. Will you let us? You can reach me at [lvigorita@gmail.com](mailto:lvigorita@gmail.com) or just stop by during our clinic hours.

Finally, please support us by attending our first annual fundraiser on May 20, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Staker in Camarillo. See the flyer insert in this May issue of CITATIONS for further details.



Thank you for your support!

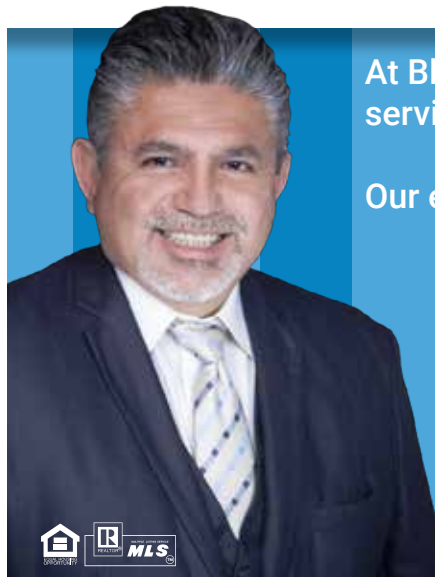
*Lou Vigorita is retired after practicing workers compensation law for over 45 years. He is President of VCLA*

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## BARRISTERS CORNER:

# The Intersection of Artificial Intelligence and Criminal Expungements

by Alex Tron

A criminal record can create lifetime barriers for people trying to move forward with their lives, obtain educational degrees and get jobs. Clearing records of an arrest or conviction through the expungement process is a vital part of the criminal justice system. For some, the process is confusing and time-consuming. Others are simply unaware the process exists. For Californians, artificial intelligence (“AI”) may be the very solution to each of these challenges.

When California voters passed Proposition 64 in 2016, recreational use of marijuana became legal. At the same time, California residents were given an opportunity to expunge certain marijuana-related criminal convictions going back many years. The burden of obtaining that relief fell, however, on the people convicted – who had to personally request expungement of these convictions.

The group Code for America (<https://codeforamerica.org>), a non-profit organization, became involved in the process, developing an algorithm to help clear a backlog of some 220,000 cases. The group developed “Clear My Record,” a tool to analyze text in court files, filtering out ineligible cases, then automatically filling out the necessary paperwork. According to the group’s senior program manager, Alia Toran-Burrell, Clear My Record had helped reduce or dismiss approximately 85,000 marijuana-related convictions in California, as of February 2020.

Assembly Bill 1076, authored by California Assemblymember Phil Tin in the 2019-2020 legislative session, proposed a requirement that the California Department of Justice (DOJ) regularly review its criminal justice databases, identify persons eligible for expungement relief by having either their arrest records or conviction records withheld from disclosure (with specified exceptions) and grant such relief to eligible persons **without a petition or motion being filed** on the person’s behalf. The bill resulted in the enactment of California Penal Code section 1203.425, which went into effect on July 1, 2022.

As enacted, Penal Code section 1203.425 requires the DOJ to complete this process

monthly and electronically notify superior courts having jurisdiction over these criminal cases, reporting all cases “for which a complaint was filed in that jurisdiction and for which relief was granted...”

Penal Code section 1203.425 was further amended with the passage of Senate Bill 731 in 2022. This law expanded eligibility for automated expungement relief to include most felony convictions past January 1, 2005, expanding automated eligibility to hundreds of thousands of individuals.

This mandate is an ideal test project for the State of California to implement AI technology like Clear My Record or similar algorithms, to filter through the massive DOJ database of arrests and criminal convictions to find persons eligible for this relief. With the implementation of section 1203.425, successful compliance almost demands the use of artificial intelligence tools.

The term “Artificial Intelligence” (“AI”) was described as early as 1956 by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Professor John McCarthy as a process with the goal of understanding and modeling the thought processes of humans and the design of machines that mimic this behavior.

Today, discussions about artificial intelligence are commonplace. The term appears in several California statutes, including Public Resources Code section 42067, subsection (e)(2)(D), which calls on AI to help evaluate the processing capacity and infrastructure for collection and recycling of plastic and other forms of single-use packaging, and Education Code section 75008, subsection (c), which tasks California community colleges with using AI and other tools to build student supports, including a “virtual help desk” to answer commonly asked questions from students at any hour of the day and week.

Artificial intelligence as a tool for the legal profession holds great promise and potential. Looking beyond the successes of Clear My Record, legal aid and pro bono attorneys can use AI tools to help more people, using efficiencies to help a larger pool of clients. By automating routine tasks and streamlining processes, AI can free up time

for legal professionals to focus on higher-value activities, such as client counseling and strategic planning. This increased capacity can enable legal aid organizations to reach more underserved communities and target specific demographics disproportionately impacted by criminal records, such as marginalized populations and low-income individuals. AI can also help bridge the gap between supply and demand for legal services, allowing more people to access expungement relief and enjoy the social and economic benefits that come with a clean criminal record.

AI platform OpenAI (<https://openai.com>) hosts ChatGPT, a popular AI model open to the public. ChatGPT interacts with human users in a “conversational way.” The following represents an actual real-world query to ChatGPT about the use of AI in California expungements:

### Question posed by human:

“Explain the use of artificial intelligence in California expungements.”

### Automated Response from ChatGPT:

*“Artificial intelligence (AI) can be used in California expungements to automate and streamline the process of reviewing and approving expungement petitions. Expungement is a legal process that allows individuals who have been convicted of certain criminal offenses to have their criminal records cleared or sealed.*

*Traditionally, the process of reviewing and approving expungement petitions is time-consuming and labor-intensive, requiring manual review of court records and other relevant documents. However, with the use of AI, this process can be significantly expedited and made more accurate.*

*One potential application of AI in expungements is natural language processing (NLP) technology, which can analyze and extract relevant information from court records and other legal documents. This technology can help identify individuals who are eligible for expungement based on their criminal history and other criteria.*



In addition, AI algorithms can be trained to detect errors or inconsistencies in expungement petitions, such as incomplete or missing information, which can help prevent delays or rejections of the petitions. AI can also assist in the process of notifying individuals when their expungement is granted, as well as updating their criminal record accordingly.

Overall, the use of AI in California expungements has the potential to improve the efficiency and accuracy of the process, while also reducing the burden on the courts and other legal personnel involved in the process.”

As AI technologies continue to advance, it is crucial for attorneys and bench officers to stay informed about these developments, explore the benefits and challenges associated with AI integration, and ensure they are leveraging AI responsibly and ethically to enhance all aspects of legal practice.

Portions of this article were originally reported by Lulu Garcia-Navarro and Emma Bowman of NPR, and Dave Lee, North America Technology Reporter for the BBC.

Learn more about Code for America and its recommendations for automatic clearance policies in legalization and decriminalization legislation at: <https://info.codeforamerica.org/recommendations-for-automatic-record-clearance-policies-report>



**Alex Tron** is an expungement attorney

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# He is Spartacus: A Chat With Sparky Abraham, Owner of Oxnard's New Consumer Advocacy Firm, Jubilee Legal.

By Panda Kröll



**SIDE BAR:** The leader of a slave rebellion in ancient Rome, Spartacus became history's most famous gladiator after the release in 1960 of the Academy Award winning film directed by Stanley Kubrick and starring Kirk Douglas. The screenplay was written by Dalton Trumbo, his return to Hollywood after a decade of being blacklisted for his refusal to cooperate with the House Un-American Activities Committee. The film has a great take-home message: One man can change the world. After interviewing Sparky, I have no doubt that this is true.

To give you an idea of what Sparky is all about, here is a quote featured prominently on the website of his new consumer advocacy firm, Jubilee Legal.

*Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. - Romans 13:8*

## **Sparky, tell us a little about yourself. Where were you born and raised?**

I was born and raised up the road in Santa Barbara. My parents were glass and rock artists, sometimes successful but more often not. My upbringing was unique, to put it mildly. Suffice to say I am never short a "fun fact" for icebreakers (named Sparky, grew up in a barn, had a pet donkey, my dad once opened a mosque at our house, etc.). Maybe mark my being a fairly straight-laced lawyer as ongoing rebellion against my parents.

**I know you graduated from Yale Law School in 2014. The Bar Exec did a search that revealed this makes you unique in the County, at least among attorneys who have joined the Ventura County Bar Association in recent years. What was the road to Yale?**

It was not direct. I started working full time during high school and didn't plan on going to college. Starting when I was 15 I worked at the SEA Landing in the Santa Barbara harbor, mostly in the office but once in a while on the boats. At the insistent encouragement of friends, including my then-girlfriend now-wife, I enrolled in Santa Barbara City College for classes. I would walk back and forth between SEA Landing and SBCC, sometimes a few times per day. To my surprise it was really enjoyable. So from there I transferred to UCLA. I was a philosophy major focusing on formal logic. After doing well on a practice LSAT I took with a friend and talking with some professors who laid out the viable alternatives (few) I chose to try for law school. Being a former community college student who had worked a harbor job full time gave me a degree of novelty at Yale that probably helped get me in.

## **Any interesting stories about Yale?**

Yale was a culture shock for me. I went without having ever known any lawyers or having any baseline expectation for what law school would be. But one of the things that drew me there was the ability for students to participate in clinics during their first year. By luck I ended up in Yale's Mortgage Foreclosure Litigation Clinic in early 2012 when the foreclosure crisis was still in full swing and ended up leading the clinic. I fell in love with the work—it was technical and math-y and scrappy and righteous all at once. The clinic professor, Jay Pottenger, was and still is one of my role models. He passed away just a few weeks ago and the outpouring from his former students (and even from his adversaries) has been really heartening.

## **Tell us about any public interest work that you did after graduating.**

After graduating I did a fellowship at Housing and Economics Rights Advocates in Oakland. My project was assisting

servicemembers and veterans with their debt issues. That started out mostly foreclosure issues but transitioned to mostly student debt issues as the local for-profit colleges started shutting down. After my fellowship I worked as an enforcement attorney for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and then as an economic justice fellow for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. My most recent job before starting my practice was as an impact litigation and policy attorney at Bet Tzedek Legal Services. Since starting my practice I've been volunteering at Swap Meet Justice (a last-Sunday-of-the-month citizenship fair at the Oxnard College Marketplace) each month and working as a volunteer with California Rural Legal Assistance on helping people expunge their criminal records.

## **Now that we know a bit about you, what's the origin of your name? Is that a nickname?**

My dad thought it was funny to claim he was going to name me "Spartacus Wholly Profit Abraham." I ended up with "Daniel" as my legal name, I think due to an intervention by my grandmother, but they started calling me Sparky early in the pregnancy and never stopped.

## **What brought you to Ventura?**

My mother-in-law moved to Oxnard a few years ago and we followed her for help with childcare. My wife and I both grew up in Santa Barbara and have lived all over the country. Coming to Oxnard felt a lot like coming home.

## **I first learned of you by reading that you had joined the local Chamber of Commerce as the owner of a new local business: Jubilee Legal. On your website, it says that you have helped hundreds of people with creditor harassment, foreclosure, student debt, credit reporting issues, and discriminatory lending. What made you decide to open Jubilee Legal?**

A few things. First, I wanted to have more control and flexibility in what I worked on and on behalf of whom. One of the frustrating things about working in legal services is having every case decision dictated by funding criteria. I wanted to

see if I could use a similar model—help people who can't afford a lawyer with debt problems—but do so using contingency and fee shifting instead of grant funding. Second, after moving to Oxnard I discovered that there is a huge need in the community here and few attorneys in my practice area. Third, I had an opportunity to work with one of my favorite non-legal organizations, the Debt Collective, on creative approaches involving law and organizing, i.e. how to use the principles of collective action to build leverage around debt. That work has included holding debtor assemblies, where we bring people together to share their stories. When you can break through the shame and guilt surrounding people's experiences with debt, what often emerges is some very strong solidarity.

**What are some peak moments that you can report regarding the work that Jubilee Legal has already accomplished?**

So far I've had some success litigating against private student loan debt buyers and for-profit tech training programs that were operating without authorization. I'm also working on an important case with

a nonprofit around training repayment agreement provisions (TRAPs), which are used to trap employees in debt for their on-the-job training if they leave their jobs. But my peak moments so far have been the smaller moments. One of the clients I assisted with an expungement immediately passed a background check and got a big promotion—that was huge. I met with a woman this week who has been homeless for nine years and was able to put her mind at ease about an identity theft incident more than a decade ago. These are relatively quick and easy compared to civil litigation, but the impact can be just as profound.

**With which local attorneys or organizations are you interfacing?**

So many local attorneys have been incredibly helpful over the past year. Some who immediately come to mind are **Xavier Villegas, Barbara Macri-Ortiz, Vanessa Frank, Laura Bartels, Damon Jenkins, Vanessa Valdez, Randy Sutter** and you. I've been lucky enough to work in one form or another with CRLA, Lutheran Social Services, CAUSE, Community Action, and the Ventura Tenants Union.

**What plans do you have for the near and distant future?**

You mean aside from shifting public consciousness and abolishing the very idea of going into debt for things like education and healthcare that are public goods? I will settle for a financially sustainable practice helping people get a little bit freer, a little bit at a time.

Sparky, it's fantastic to welcome you to the Ventura County legal community. Thank you for all that you do, especially for under-represented consumers.



*Panda Kroll practices complex timeshare litigation in federal court and is the founder of the Timeshare Law Library. She is a member of CITATIONS' editorial board.*



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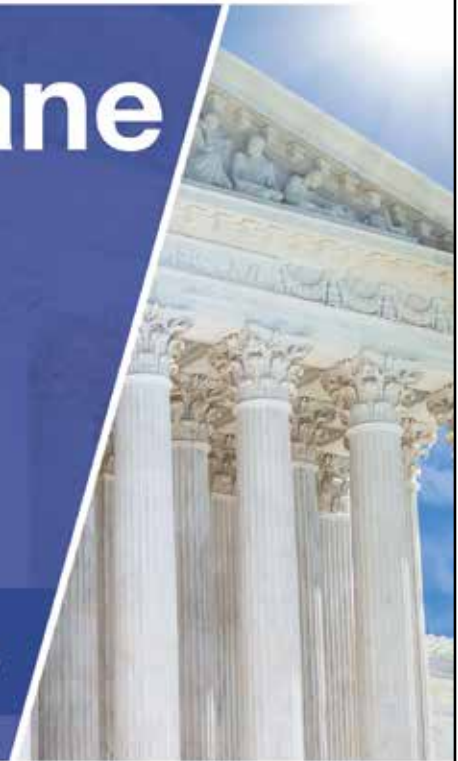
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## HAVE YOU HEARD?

VCBA volunteers and Executive Director **Sandra Rubio** were proud to be an integral part of the Ventura Unified School District's k-12 two-way immersion program annual event held on April 18, 2023 at Anacapa Middle School. The program supports bilingualism, biliteracy, multicultural proficiency, and community participation. 85 Students participated and conducted interviews with 24 professionals. Thank you to **Christine Wyatt** and **Yadira Plaza** (Public Defenders Unit), **Eliana Gomez** (Quirk Law Firm), **Antonio Rodriguez** (Staker | Johnson), and **Vanessa Frank**.



**Associate Justice Tari L. Cody** took her seat on Division Six of the Second District Court of Appeal on April 17. Justice Cody who became a Ventura County Superior Court in 2006, most recently served as the Supervising Judge of the Juvenile/Probate courthouse and was assigned to Courtroom J1 where she presided over juvenile dependency matters, adoptions and guardianships. Her Superior Court successor has not yet been named.



CITATIONS editorial board member **Mari K. Rockenstein** is Counsel for US Navy, Office of General Counsel on Naval Base Ventura County. She'll serve in the Center for Seabees and Facilities Engineering/ Civil Engineers Corps Officers School. She is also the Environmental Law Training Director.



The Ventura County Superior Court has hired retired **Judge Steven Hintz** as a Mental Health Hearing Officer. Judge Hintz succeeds the late **Donald Hurley** who passed away in February 2023. Judge Hintz spent 25 years on the Ventura County bench before being elected to serve as the Ventura County Treasurer-Tax Collector from 2011 to 2023. The Court's Mental Health Hearing Officers preside over proceedings regarding involuntary medical holds and conservatorship proceedings under the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Continued from page 3*

States Constitutions provide for the right to effective assistance of legal counsel to prevent violations of equal protection and due process rights. Even us attorneys who don't practice criminal law realize the need for this constitutional right to counsel.

I hope to meet more Public Defenders at VCBA events, as it has been very interesting to learn about some of the happenings at the PD's Office. The same goes for other attorneys in the public sector at various other offices. I would love to meet you. For us attorneys outside the various bubbles of the public sector, learning about and understanding what other attorneys are doing in their fields can only help us grow as a community.



**Brian C. Israel** is an associate attorney at **Norman Dowler, LLP** in Ventura. His practice focuses on estate planning, probate, and trust administration. He can be reached at [bisrael@normandowler.com](mailto:bisrael@normandowler.com) or at 805-654-0911



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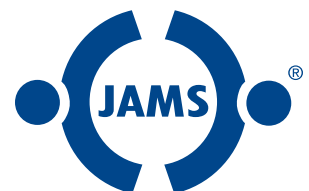


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The National Charity League's mission is to foster the mother-daughter relationship through an ongoing commitment to philanthropy, culture and leadership. Our programs empower women to succeed as confident, well-rounded contributors to society while making a positive impact in the communities they serve.

VCBA member **Laura Withrow** of Withrow Employment Law, PC currently serves on the executive board of the Vista Robles Chapter as the Vice-President of Grade Level Advisors. She has been a member of NCL for the past seven years and has thoroughly enjoyed the incredible women she has met, the leadership opportunities for both her daughters and herself, and the ability to give back to our community by volunteering time with local philanthropy partners.

The National Charity League is always looking for 7th through 12th grade girls and their mothers who are interested in strengthening the mother-daughter bond, obtaining valuable leadership skills, and inspiring a legacy of social awareness and compassion. Our chapter covers the greater Conejo Valley area; however, there are other chapters throughout Ventura County.

If you would like to volunteer or participate in this wonderful program, please contact Laura Withrow via e-mail at [laura@withrowemploymentlaw.com](mailto:laura@withrowemploymentlaw.com).

If you volunteer or are active with a nonprofit that you'd like to highlight, please email [sandra@vcba.org](mailto:sandra@vcba.org).

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