

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT LAUNCHES FIRST CALIFORNIA JUDICIAL MENTOR PROGRAM IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA IN COLLABORATION WITH THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM.

Together with Stanislaus, Calaveras, and Tuolumne Counties, San Joaquin County is pleased to announce the launch of the California Judicial Mentor Program which all four counties will operate as a regional collaboration.

San Joaquin County Superior Court Presiding Judge Xapuri B. Villapudua and Assistant Presiding Judge Michael D. Coughlan announced the first of its kind California Judicial Mentor Program in Northern California in collaboration with the Office of Governor Gavin Newsom. The program is modeled after a similar recently-launched program in Los Angeles and will connect mentor judges with local attorneys to increase the applicant pool for new judges. The program's intent is to bring the state closer to Governor Newsom's goal of appointing highly capable judges reflective of the rich diversity of the state. "We look forward to working with Governor Newsom's Judicial Appointments Secretary Luis Cespedes in his efforts to encourage and support qualified applicants seeking judicial appointments. Our Court supports a highly qualified, diverse and inclusive judiciary," Presiding Judge Villapudua said. Secretary Cespedes said the program "IS A CRITICAL STEP TO ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS TO JUDICIAL MENTORSHIP FOR ATTORNEYS CONSIDERING APPLYING TO THE BENCH."

The program pairs local attorneys committed to public service with judges who will help demystify the judicial appointment process, answer questions about the application and vetting process, and suggest new skills and experiences to improve suitability for appointment.

The program will work with local bar associations, nonprofit legal organizations, government lawyers, law firms, and solo practitioners to identify and encourage promising judicial candidates to apply for appointment. The goal will be to mentor them in their development, thus creating a pipeline of highly qualified applicants eligible for appointment.

To learn more about the program, visit the San Joaquin County Superior Court's website.