



Superior Court of California County of Orange **News Release**

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Oct. 31, 2019
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OCSC Hosts First Young Women's Leadership Conference

Santa Ana, CA - On Thursday, October 24, 2019, the Orange County Superior Court hosted 130 young women from throughout the County's high schools for the first ever **Young Women's Leadership Conference**. The event took place at Central Justice Center, located at 700 Civic Center West, Santa Ana, CA.



Orange County Superior Court Judge Elizabeth Macias, Chair of the Court's Judicial Outreach Committee opens the Orange County Superior first ever **Young Women's Leadership Conference**.

The purpose of the conference was to provide an opportunity for young women to learn about the legal profession and possibly a career on the bench.

"Orange County Superior Court is deeply committed to civic education and engagement," said Orange County Superior Court **Judge Elizabeth Macias**, Chair of the Court's Judicial Outreach Committee.

"Presently, our youth are making important contributions in their communities. Today's Young Women's Civic Leadership Conference is yet another opportunity to provide a greater understanding of the judicial branch, the legal community, and the role our youth hold within it," she added.

During the event, students heard from several distinguished speakers, participated in question and answer sessions with speakers and panelists, and took part in a session with judicial officers, attorneys, and law students.

Judge Macias opened the Conference and **Orange County Superior Court Presiding Judge Kirk H. Nakamura** delivered the opening remarks. **Assistant Presiding Judge Erick L. Larsh** and **Orange County Bar Association President Deirdre Kelly** were present.

Attorney Kimberly La Salle and Judge Macias led the Elevator Speech Exercise workshop for the students and the keynote was delivered by Civil Rights attorney and UCI Law **Professor, Monica Ramirez Almadani**.

Three panel discussions were presented. The first panel focused on the bench officer's duties given their respective case assignments and on the bench officer's path to the judicial bench. The panel was moderated by **Judge Kathrine Lewis** and included **Judge Cynthia Herrera**, Limited Criminal Assignment, **Judge Daphne Sykes**, Family Law Assignment, **Commissioner Carmen Luege**, Civil Law Assignment, and **Judge Karen Robinson**, Felony Calendar Assignment.

The second panel focused on the path to becoming a lawyer. The panel was moderated by **Judge Thomas Delaney** and included **Orange County Women Lawyers Association President Michelle Philo**, **Orange County Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Chair Kristin Gomes**, law students **Celeste Gonzalez** of Chapman Fowler Law School and **Alexis Hall** of UCI Law School.

The third panel focused on the judge's experiences on the bench. It was moderated by **Judge Kim Hubbard** and it included **Judge Joanne Motoike**, Juvenile Presiding Judge, **Judge Kimberly Menninger**, Supervising Judge, Criminal Panel, **Judge Glenda Sanders**, Former Presiding Judge, Complex Civil Assignment, and **Judge Mary Kreber Varipapa**, Presiding Judge, Collaborative Court.

Maya Sabbaghian, 17, of Portola High School, attended the Conference to find out paths to legal careers and "to be able to come to a conference, surrounded by driven young women."

The 12th grader also said she wanted to "learn about the importance of civic engagement as an empowering experience."

Chanel Nejad also a 12th grader from Huntington Beach High School expressed her ambition to become an assistant district attorney. "I aim to learn more about the American Justice System and further my interest in politics."

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