



RIVERSIDE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE
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**DISTRICT ATTORNEY MIKE HESTRIN ANNOUNCES
THE FIRST MEMBERS OF HIS EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM**

RIVERSIDE – Today, Jan. 7, 2015, just days into his administration, Riverside County District Attorney Mike Hestrin has announced the first members of his Executive Management Team.

The Executive Management Team will currently be comprised of seven veteran prosecutors, all with at least 17 years of experience. Others may be added to the team in the near future.

Collectively, the current team has 170 years of experience as prosecutors.

“This team is a mix of different kinds of experience that I am confident will come together in the manner needed to rebuild this office,” Hestrin said.

The seven members of the DA’s Senior Management Team, along with their titles, assignments and background are as follows:

- **Chief Assistant District Attorney John Aki, countywide**
Aki has been with the DA’s Office for 18 years during which time he has prosecuted a variety of cases including drug crimes and gang-related crimes and was in the Homicide Unit for 10 years. He has prosecuted more than 30 homicide trials including nine death penalty cases. In 2010, the Association of Capital Litigators named Aki the National Capital Litigator of the Year. He also was twice named Riverside County’s Prosecutor of the Year.
- **Assistant District Attorney Sue Steding, Eastern Division**
Steding was with the DA’s Office for nearly 35 years before retiring in June 2010. Under longtime District Attorney Grover Trask, Steding was promoted to Assistant District Attorney in the Eastern Division and she was later promoted to Chief Assistant District Attorney countywide. During her time with the DA’s Office she received numerous awards and community accolades. Steding is returning to the office as a TAP (Temporary Assignment Program) employee. TAP employees can be utilized for temporary assistance or special projects in all county departments.
- **Assistant District Attorney Elaina Bentley, Administration**
Bentley has been with the DA’s Office for about 27 years and has served as the Chief Deputy District Attorney over the Special Prosecution Section and Juvenile Division. She also has supervised numerous units in the Administration Division including victim restitution, asset forfeiture, and writs and appeals.
- **Chief Deputy District Attorney Vicki Hightower, Special Prosecution Section**
Hightower has been a prosecutor for 20 years specializing in white collar crime, sexual assault cases and child abuse cases. She most recently has served as the Chief DDA over the Special Prosecution Section (SPS) and Juvenile Division. SPS investigates and prosecutes white collar crimes and units within SPS including major fraud, real estate fraud, insurance fraud, consumer protection, elder abuse, and professional standards such as political corruption.

- **Chief Deputy District Attorney Michael Cabral, Southwest Division**
Cabral has been a prosecutor for more than 28 years including 20 years in Los Angeles County. He was at the Riverside County DA's Office from 2006 to 2010 as the Chief DDA over the Family Protection Division and he also prosecuted public integrity cases. He then served as an Assistant Chief DDA in Yolo County before now returning to the Riverside County DA's Office.
- **Chief Deputy District Attorney Michelle Paradise, Major Crimes Unit**
Paradise has been a prosecutor at the DA's Office for 17 years. She has successfully prosecuted more than 80 felony jury trials over that time with the last 24 being homicide trials, including several death penalty cases. In 2007 she received the California District Attorney Association's Outstanding Prosecutor of the Year award and was named Riverside County's Prosecutor of the Year in 2006.
- **Chief Deputy District Attorney Michael Soccio, Court Operations**
Soccio has been with the DA's Office for 25 years. During that time he conducted more than 100 trials, including three death penalty cases. Soccio convicted the first woman ever sentenced to death in Riverside County history. He has been a Chief DDA with the office for a total of 10 years over the Major Crimes Unit.