



RIVERSIDE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
**NEWS RELEASE**  
MIKE HESTRIN, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

WEBSITE: WWW.RIVCODA.ORG

TWITTER: @RIVCODA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
JUNE 23, 2016

CONTACT: JOHN HALL  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY INFORMATION SPECIALIST  
951.955.8662

**NEARLY \$500,000 IN ASSET FORFEITURE FUNDS  
AWARDED TO 36 RIVERSIDE COUNTY ORGANIZATIONS**

**RIVERSIDE** –District Attorney Mike Hestrin, Sheriff Stan Sniff, Chief Probation Officer Mark Hake, and Riverside Police Chief Sergio Diaz announced at a news conference today, June 23, 2016, the awarding of nearly a half-million dollars in asset forfeiture funds to three dozen Riverside County organizations.

A total of \$445,226 in Asset Forfeiture Special Fund money is being awarded to 36 Riverside County organizations countywide for their programs combatting drug abuse and diverting gang activity in high-risk elementary and secondary school age students. The fund is maintained by the DA's Office and the distribution of funds is determined by a panel consisting of the DA, the Sheriff, the Chief Probation Officer, and a Police Chief selected by the other police chiefs in the county – that currently being Riverside's Police Chief Sergio Diaz. The amounts distributed this year ranged from \$250 to \$40,000 and went to organizations from throughout Riverside County.

District Attorney Mike Hestrin said: "We are very proud of the Asset Forfeiture Special Fund committee and the work and efforts of so many non-profit and community-based organizations to combat drug abuse and gang activity. All of your law enforcement leaders wholeheartedly support your efforts to have a real impact on our communities."

Riverside County Sheriff Stan Sniff said: "This is yet another little-known example of the great good that asset forfeiture provides to both law enforcement and the communities we serve. We have been proud to utilize some of these funds, pursuant to controlling statutes, over these many years to help untold numbers of 'at-risk' kids in a wide variety of worthy drug and gang prevention programs all across Riverside County."

Riverside County Chief Probation Officer Mark Hake said: "There are amazing organizations, both public and private that are focusing their efforts on identifying and engaging at-risk youth. We know these organizations often struggle to obtain funding and we know the money disbursed to these organizations through the asset forfeiture program is used to reach our at-risk youth resulting in positive opportunities and positive outcomes for our youth."

Riverside Police Chief Sergio Diaz said: "All of us who work in the criminal justice system know that for our communities to be safer and free of crime, we need to invest in young people. The community-based groups that received this financial assistance are engaged in crime prevention and youth development at the most basic and effective level. It is fitting that this program uses money seized from drug dealers to keep our young people away from drugs and gangs."

The DA's Office files and prosecutes civil narcotics asset forfeiture cases which arise when a law enforcement agency makes a seizure of currency involved in the sale, transportation, or manufacturing of illegal narcotics, pursuant to state Health and Safety Code section 11470. The intent of the state civil narcotics asset forfeiture laws is to remove the tools and profits from those involved in the illegal drug trade. When currency is forfeited to the state, a certain percentage is placed into a special fund set aside by the state Legislature to develop and maintain programs combatting drug abuse and diverting gang activity in high-risk school age children and juveniles.

###