



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Court of Appeal Reaches Out to San Bernardino High School Students**

### *Outreach Plus Program Encourages Students to Stay in School*

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Riverside—An innovative court-community outreach program called “Outreach Plus” will be held by the Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District, Division Two (Riverside) at Aquinas High School, 2772 Sterling Avenue, San Bernardino, on Wednesday, April 28, Presiding Justice Manuel A. Ramirez has announced.

The court’s outreach programs have reached almost 8,000 high school students since they began in 2002.

The Outreach Plus program, launched in 2005, features classroom visits by the justices and local lawyers to urge high school students to stay in school and to consider careers in the law. Students are taught about the legal system and the Court of Appeal. The court developed the program in response to the emphasis on court-community collaboration by Chief Justice Ronald M. George.

The program at Aquinas High School will include a reception with students at 8:15 a.m. and oral argument at 9:10 a.m., followed by a question and answer session with students and classroom visits by justices and members of the San Bernardino County Bar Association.

Students at Aquinas High School pursue a rigorous course of college preparatory education—98 percent of Aquinas students go on to college and 83 percent of its students are accepted directly into four-year colleges and universities. Graduation requirements meet or exceed University of California requirements and include four years of classes in religion and 100 hours of community service.

Oral argument in a criminal appeal and a juvenile delinquency appeal will be held in the Aquinas High School Auditorium, each lasting about 30 minutes. The public has been invited to attend the special oral argument proceedings. The cases to be argued are:

(over)

- *People v Zimmerman*, in which the defendant was convicted of shooting to death one of his drug clients with a sawed-off shotgun despite his contention that he did not aim at the victim. On appeal, the defendant contends that the trial court erred in admitting (1) a video recording of the test firing of the shotgun to observe the dimensions of the pellets' spread pattern at different distances from the target and (2) expert opinion testimony that improperly implied that defendant had intentionally fired the gun at the victim.
- *People v. P.B.*, a juvenile delinquency case in which it was found true that the minor attempted robbery resulting in a standoff with a group of students in a park, during which the minor threatened the students with a shotgun. On appeal, the defendant contends that (1) insufficient evidence supports the shotgun use finding; (2) several probation conditions failed to include a requirement that the minor know he was violating the particular condition (3) a "maximum term of confinement" was incorrectly imposed, which could affect the minor if he commits another crime while under the juvenile court's jurisdiction; and (4) the juvenile court did not clearly specify whether possession of the shotgun was a misdemeanor or felony.

The Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District, Division Two hears appeals from the superior courts in Inyo, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties. The court heard oral argument in San Bernardino from 1929 to 1999 and since 1999 has been located in Riverside. The court held oral argument a number of times at Riverside County high schools between 2002 and 2005. Starting in January 2005 with a visit to Pacific High School in San Bernardino, the justices have gone into classrooms to speak directly to students about their futures.

The Outreach Plus program has been held at Rialto High School (January 2006), Colton High School (January 2007), and Chaffey High School (February 2008) in San Bernardino County; Bishop High School (September 2005 and October 2007) in Inyo County; and North High School (February 2007) and Arlington High School (March 2008) in Riverside County.

The court created Outreach Plus in consultation with Herbert R. Fischer, Ph.D., former San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, and with the collaboration of the San Bernardino County Bar Association. The San Bernardino County Bar Association is California's oldest continuously operating bar association, serving the Inland Empire's legal community and public for 130 years. This is the court's first outreach to a private school, and the court and the bar association have adapted the program to Aquinas High School with the assistance of Principal Francis Herdlein, Assistant Principal Chris Barrows, Vice-Principal Mark Hunter, and government teacher Netta Jones, J.D.

For more information, call Paula Garcia, Assistant Clerk/Administrator, at 951-248-0200.