



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **AOC Director William Vickrey Honored for Expanding Legal Services for Californians**

### ***Public Interest Clearinghouse Presents Awards July 18***

San Francisco—William C. Vickrey, Administrative Director of the California Courts, will be honored Tuesday, July 18, for his contributions to access to justice through the development of court program services to meet the diverse needs of children, families, and self-represented litigants.

The award will be presented by Chief Justice Ronald M. George at the Public Interest Clearinghouse's annual Opening Doors to Justice Benefit and Silent Auction at the City Club, 155 Sansome Street, Suite 950, San Francisco. The program begins at 6:15 p.m.

The event will recognize the accomplishments of four honorees who have devoted their careers to creating access to justice and self-sufficiency for California's most vulnerable populations: the indigent, the elderly, and those with disabilities.

As Administrative Director of the Courts since 1992, Mr. Vickrey has worked closely with Chief Justice George in leading the state's judicial branch through historic changes to improve the statewide administration of justice. He established the AOC's nationally recognized Center for Families, Children & the Courts.

In addition, he has championed the development and implementation of initiatives to improve the state's response to children in foster care and access to interpreters for non-English speaking individuals in civil cases. His leadership on behalf of self-represented litigants includes the Online Self-Help Center of the California Courts Web site and a pioneering statewide Self-Help Action Plan for courts to provide adequate resources and access to justice for families and children, and the 4.5 million Californians who represent themselves in state courts each year.

With Mr. Vickrey's support, the state's Equal Access Fund was established to finance legal services programs for low-income litigants.

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This fund provides \$15 million in annual funds to 99 legal services organizations that offer free legal services to low-income clients.

Mr. Vickrey has served in national leadership positions as president of the Conference of State Court Administrators and vice-chair of the National Center for State Courts board of directors. He is member of the national Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care, which has made comprehensive recommendations for finding safe and secure homes for foster children in the United States.

Mr. Vickrey's leadership and public service have been recognized by the Judicial Council, which awarded him its Distinguished Service Award, and by the National Center for State Courts, which selected him for its prestigious Warren E. Burger Award. Before joining the AOC, he was the State Court Administrator for the Utah Administrative Office of the Courts, from 1985 to 1992.

In addition to Mr. Vickrey, other honorees tomorrow night will be:

- Morrison and Foerster's Pro Bono Counsel Kathi Pugh, for her two decades of pro bono service and equal access in the legal profession, especially in the areas of civil rights, housing and homelessness
- Chief Consultant to the Assembly Human Services Committee Casey S. McKeever, for his nearly 30 years of advocacy as an anti-poverty lawyer, and expertise in sponsoring critical legislation to further the rights of the underserved
- In memoriam to Ms. Tanya Neiman, former director of the Volunteer Legal Services Program of the Bar Association of San Francisco, who died earlier this year after a long battle with cancer, will be honored for her vision of holistic advocacy to create self-sufficiency for low-income and indigent communities

The Opening Doors to Justice Awards will be presented by Chief Justice George, Equal Rights Advocates Executive Director Irma Herrera, and former state Assemblyman Darrell Steinberg, with a special presentation by the State Bar.

The event will take place from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m., with the program beginning at 6:15 p.m. Admission for the event is \$65 for individuals, \$40 for nonprofit employees and government staff, and \$20 for students. For more information please call 415-834-0100, x309 or email [lbenedict@pic.org](mailto:lbenedict@pic.org).

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