



NEWS RELEASE OC 31-10
Contact: Philip R. Carrizosa, 415-865-8044

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 28, 2010

AOC Receives \$1 Million Grant to Expand JusticeCorps *Will Allow Launch of Program to Sacramento Area*

SAN FRANCISCO—The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has been awarded a new AmeriCorps grant of \$1 million per year for three years to expand its California JusticeCorps Program. The new funding will allow the AOC to expand its JusticeCorps program in Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, and San Diego as well as launch a new JusticeCorps program in the Sacramento area.

U.S. Representative Doris Matsui, who represents the Sacramento area and serves as the Co-Chair of the National Service Caucus in Congress, wrote a letter of support on behalf of the AOC grant application earlier this year. “Through the expanded program, JusticeCorps members will assist several thousand self-represented litigants with family, housing, domestic violence, and financial legal matters, such as requesting restraining orders, responding to eviction notices and establishing child support,” said Congresswoman Matsui. “I am so pleased that the \$1 million in federal funding will allow this program to bring its critical work to the Sacramento area and help many of our community’s most vulnerable members.”

According to the Judicial Council’s Task Force on Self-Represented Litigants, over 4 million people come to court each year in California without an attorney to represent them—typically because they cannot afford one. The California JusticeCorps program was created to improve the capacity of our judicial system to provide access to justice for all Californians. JusticeCorps is the only AmeriCorps program of its kind that recruits, trains, and places undergraduate college students in service to assist members of the public in court-based legal access self-help centers. With the invaluable assistance of JusticeCorps members, self-help centers can provide services aimed not just at resolving legal matters, but as importantly, listening to concerns, reducing anxieties and clarifying confusing circumstances.

With the new grant funding, starting in the fiscal year 2010-2011, JusticeCorps will place over 300 students in service in court-based legal access self-help centers providing over 100,000 hours of assistance to the public in matters involving eviction, divorce, child custody, domestic violence and small claims.

Since the program began in 2004, JusticeCorps members have: assisted 194,600 self-represented litigants in 24 different languages, filed over 130,300 legal documents, and provided over 122,500 referrals to additional services.

The Corporation for National and Community Service announced the \$1,021,305 grant on June 7. The grant is among the largest of 31 grants totaling approximately \$19.2 million in California. Previously, funding for the JusticeCorps program has come exclusively from state sources.

(more)

The JusticeCorps grant is one of first round of grants made under the new bipartisan Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act signed last year expand and enhance AmeriCorps, a national network of programs that engages more than 70,000 people each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in communities throughout the nation.

For more information about JusticeCorps, see: www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/justicecorps/

#

The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.