



NEWS RELEASE OC 50-11
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Annual Statewide Youth Court Summit to Convene June 24–26

SAN FRANCISCO—The sixth annual California Youth Court Summit will take place June 24–26, 2011, at Chapman University. This year’s theme is Youth Courts Connected. Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye will present opening remarks and swear in new officers of the California Association of Youth Courts, including Assistant Presiding Judge David S. Wesley of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County and president-elect of the association.

Opening day begins at 6 p.m. on Friday, June 24, at Kennedy Hall. Attendees will be welcomed by a distinguished group of officials, including William C. Vickrey, Administrative Director of the Courts; Ronald G. Overholt, AOC Chief Deputy Director; and Tom Campbell, Dean of Chapman University School of Law. Attendees will also engage in a True Colors workshop facilitated by Stephanie Wang, which is designed to improve communication through recognition of a person’s true character.

The summit is produced by a collaboration of youth/peer courts, the California Association of Youth Courts, and the Administrative Office of the Court (AOC) Center for Families, Children & the Courts. It provides a unique opportunity for youth, peer court and youth organization staff, juvenile court bench officers, and education experts to share best practices and to provide assistance to those who want to start a youth court.

On Saturday, June 25, workshops will be presented by teen court directors, other professionals, and youth who have participated in teen court.

- Youth from Santa Cruz County and Shasta County peer courts will present an interactive mock trial. The youth will develop the mock case and assign the roles of teen attorneys, plaintiff, defendant, witness, and other court staff.
- The Constitutional Rights Foundation will present “The Constitution and the Bill of Rights: Equal Protection Moot Court.” This session focuses on the concept of equal protection and how the 14th Amendment applies to college admissions. Students will learn about Supreme Court cases such as *Dred Scott*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and *Brown v. Board of Education* and argue a real Supreme Court case.

On Sunday, June 26, Sylvia Mendez, recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, is the featured speaker. A special screening of the award-winning documentary about the history of school

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segregation and the battle for civil rights in California, *Mendez vs. Westminster: For All the Children/Para Todos los Niños*, will follow Mendez's talk.

Youth courts encourage civic engagement, promote respect for the law, and offer educational opportunities to youth volunteers and offenders while providing a way to handle minor delinquency cases that is more cost effective than that of the traditional justice system and that results in reduced recidivism rates. Youth courts in California have been growing at a phenomenal pace over the past 20 years: in 1991 California had 2 of these specialized courts; now there are more than 50.

More about youth courts is on the California Courts website at www.courts.ca.gov/5991.htm. To see a map of the Chapman University campus, go to www.chapman.edu/map.

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