



Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts  
Office of Communications, 455 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102-3688  
California Courts Infoline 800-900-5980, [www.courts.ca.gov](http://www.courts.ca.gov)

**NEWS RELEASE**

Contact: [Teresa Ruano](mailto:Teresa.Ruano@courts.ca.gov), 415-865-7740

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 22, 2013

---

## **2013 Distinguished Service Awards Announced**

*Judicial Council awards honor service, fostering access to justice,  
and defense of the rule of law*

SAN FRANCISCO—The Judicial Council of California today announced six winners of its 2013 [Distinguished Service Awards](#), the highest honors given by the council. Now in its 20th year, the awards program recognizes those who have demonstrated extraordinary leadership and made significant contributions to access to justice and the administration of justice.

The awards will be presented later this year at a special ceremony in San Francisco. The recipients are (details follow):

**Stanley Mosk Defender of Justice Award**

—Secretary Leon Panetta, former Secretary of Defense and co-founder, Panetta Institute for Public Policy

**Ronald M. George Award for Judicial Excellence**

—Presiding Judge Laurie Earl, Superior Court of Sacramento County

**William C. Vickrey Leadership in Judicial Administration Award**

—Ms. Kim Turner, Chief Executive Officer, Superior Court of Marin County

**Bernard E. Witkin Amicus Curiae Award**

—Judge David Rothman (Ret.), Superior Court of Los Angeles County

**Richard D. Huffman Justice for Children & Families Award**

—Judge Becky Dugan, Superior Court of Riverside County

—Justice Laurence D. Kay (Ret), Court of Appeal, First Appellate District

## Stanley Mosk Defender of Justice Award

*Honors individuals from federal, state, and local government for significant contributions to advancing equal access to fair and consistent justice in California.*

**Secretary Leon Panetta** was honored for his leadership and lifelong commitment to public service, and for sharing his experience and guidance with California court leaders working to modernize the judicial branch's technology infrastructure to create greater access to fair and equal justice throughout the state.

Secretary Panetta's guidance and counsel, drawn from his broad experience and deep knowledge of research, technology, and government, is helping the California judicial branch leaders transition the court system to 21st century technology standards.

Secretary Panetta's lifetime commitment to public service began nearly 40 years ago. After earning his J.D. from the Santa Clara University School of Law, he joined the U.S. Army, serving as an officer in Army Military Intelligence and receiving the Army Commendation Medal. He was discharged in 1966 as a First Lieutenant.

As a California member of Congress from 1977 to 1993, he was a key participant in agriculture, healthcare, marine, and federal budget issues, and from 1989 to 1993, he chaired the House Budget Committee. He authored legislation that included the Hunger Prevention Act of 1988, Medicare and Medicaid coverage for hospice care for the terminally ill, and numerous measures to protect the California coast.

Secretary Panetta served President Bill Clinton as director of the Office of Management and Budget, and later as Chief of Staff. He served President Barack Obama as Director of the CIA and then as Secretary of Defense, until February 2013.

With his wife Sylvia, he co-founded the Panetta Institute for Public Policy, based in Monterey, California, a nonpartisan, not-for-profit study center that seeks to attract thoughtful men and women to lives of public service and prepare them for the policy challenges of the future.

## Ronald M. George Award for Judicial Excellence

*This award honors members of the judiciary for their extraordinary dedication to the highest principles of the administration of justice. The award was previously called the Jurist of the Year Award.*

[Presiding Judge Laurie Earl](#), Superior Court of Sacramento County, chair of the Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee, and co-chair of the Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee, was selected for her visionary and collaborative leadership and dedication in the groundbreaking effort over the past year to create greater equity in how funds are allocated among the 58 trial courts.

Beginning in November 2012, Judge Earl led a working group that developed an unprecedented, innovative funding allocation formula that is empirically based, transparent, and fairer to all trial courts. The working group she led worked tirelessly and quickly, often meeting weekly or even more frequently over six months to develop and refine the model, consulting with trial court leaders statewide to achieve branchwide consensus on the new formula. Even courts that stood to lose funding as a result of implementing the new formula endorsed it, and it was unanimously approved by the Judicial Council in April 2013.

Judge Earl directly oversaw the effort and worked persistently, collaboratively, and constructively through many challenges to see the process through. Earlier this year, the Chief Justice appointed Judge Earl to continue overseeing the funding model's implementation as co-chair of the new Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee.

Judge Earl was appointed to the bench in 2005, serving as both a general trial judge for civil and criminal matters and in a jail courtroom handling arraignments and pleas. In 2010, she served as assistant presiding judge, and in 2012 was elected by her colleagues to serve as presiding judge. In September 2012, Judge Earl was also appointed by the Chief Justice to a one-year term as chair of the Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee, and in that capacity serves as an advisory, nonvoting member of the Judicial Council.

Judge Earl began her legal career in 1989 as an assistant public defender in Sacramento. In 1995, she became a deputy district attorney, where she handled cases involving domestic violence, sexual assault, and homicide. In 2004, she was appointed to serve as senior assistant inspector general for the state of California, in charge of dependent review of investigations at the Department of Corrections. In 2005, she was recognized by her alma mater, Lincoln Law School of Sacramento, as Alumnus of the Year, and in 2010 was named Judge of the Year by the Capitol City Trial Lawyers.

## William C. Vickrey Leadership in Judicial Administration Award

*This award honors individuals in judicial administration for significant contributions to and leadership in their profession.*

**Kim Turner**, chief executive officer of the Superior Court of Marin County, was selected for her many activities and contributions, both statewide and in the court she serves, that have contributed to statewide advances in the administration and service delivery of the superior courts.

Ms. Turner currently chairs a working group on business process reengineering that provides training, assistance, and reference materials for California courts seeking to increase efficiency and improve service by redesigning business processes. The working group recently conducted training sessions across the state to strong endorsements by participating courts, and more sessions are scheduled for this fall.

Ms. Turner also has been a very active member of a working group improving trial court records management, and she helped draft proposed revisions to statutes governing trial court records retention. In addition, she has been actively involved in working groups fostering e-access and modernizing case management systems.

In 2009, Ms. Turner was appointed by the Chief Justice to an advisory role on the Judicial Council representing court executives, and in 2011 she was appointed to a one-year term as chair of the Court Executives Advisory Committee. For many years, she has served on numerous Judicial Council committees, working groups, and task forces, whose work benefits the court system, with a focus on equal access, equal justice, and procedural fairness. She advocates for modernizing management and administration and making processes and procedures more understandable and accessible by the public.

Ms. Turner has served the Marin Superior Court since 1997, first as chief financial officer, and then as assistant executive officer, before her appointment as CEO in 2005. She is a Certified Management Accountant and a Fellow with the Institute of Court Management at the National Center for State Courts. In 1999, she was recognized by NCSC with a Director's Award for Outstanding Research Project.

## Bernard E. Witkin Amicus Curiae Award

*This award honors individuals other than members of the judiciary for their outstanding contributions to the courts of California.*

**Judge David M. Rothman** (Ret.), Superior Court of Los Angeles County, was honored for his unparalleled leadership in judicial education, particularly his singular contributions to judicial ethics.

More than 30 years ago, Judge Rothman founded the modern course on judicial ethics at the California Judicial College, and he is the author of the *California Judicial Conduct Handbook*, now in its third edition, published in 2007. First published in 1990, this book is the undisputed go-to guide on judicial ethics for California judges. This comprehensive resource (nearly 700 pages not including appendices) sets forth the ethical rules for judges in clear, accurate, and understandable terms. Judges usually cite the book simply as “Rothman”.

No other state has such a comprehensive resource on judicial ethics. It has become a resource for the Commission on Judicial Performance, which has quoted from the book in some of its disciplinary opinions, and it has been cited by the California Supreme Court as a reference.

Judge Rothman served for many years on the faculty of the California Judicial College, including two years as its dean. Before retiring from the bench in 1996, he also served as board member and chairman of the California Judges Association's ethics committee and was a member of the Supreme Court's Advisory Committee on the California Code of Judicial Ethics, as well as the Judicial Council's Advisory Committee on Gender Bias in the Courts.

Judge Rothman joined the bench in 1976 and was highly regarded for his 20 years of service in the Superior Court of Los Angeles County. He was appointed first to Los Angeles Municipal Court and in 1980 to Los Angeles Superior Court. From 1989 to 1994, he served as supervising judge of the court's West District in Santa Monica. He also served as a justice pro tempore on the Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, during which time he wrote several significant decisions.

## Richard D. Huffman Justice for Children & Families Award

*Honors individuals for significant contributions to advancing justice for children and families in California.*

**Judge Becky Dugan**, Superior Court of Riverside County, was selected for her decades of leadership and contributions advancing justice for children, families, and those with mental health issues. She has focused particularly on supporting victims of domestic violence and is well-known for her expertise in collaborative courts for those with drug and mental health issues. As a judge, she takes her role a step further, finding ways to assemble resources to help people get their lives back on track, and teaching others to do the same.

A statewide expert on domestic violence, Judge Dugan has taught other judges, justice partners, members of the bar, and medical and social services professionals on the efficient processing of temporary restraining orders, helping to ensure that those in need of protection can get assistance from the courts and law enforcement promptly and consistently. For 17 years, she has taught courses at colleges, universities, and in a wide variety of professional settings on a broad range of topics, including family law, mental health and justice, bias, and other issues.

This teaching experience builds on decades of experience serving the courts. Her career began in the 1980s as an attorney and public defender. Appointed to the Superior Court of Riverside County as a commissioner in 1987, she was elected to a judgeship in 1999, and later advanced to administrative roles in juvenile and family court. For seven years, from 1998 to 2005, she volunteered continually as on-call magistrate for all domestic violence restraining orders countywide, a service provided after hours and on weekends and holidays.

Judge Dugan was also instrumental in establishing a mental health court in Riverside County. The court, which opened in 2001, deals with criminal defendants with mental health issues, providing a dedicated calendar and ensuring that their special needs are met with community and medical resources, while also enabling them to resolve their cases.

Judge Dugan has worked on numerous national, state, and local committees dealing with violence against women, drug court issues, mental health and community access. She served on the Judicial Council's Family and Juvenile Advisory Committee for 12 years, and continues to serve on the planning committee for the Violence Against Women Education Project.

**Justice Laurence D. Kay**, (Ret.), Former Presiding Justice, Court of Appeal, First Appellate District was honored for his leadership and contributions that have benefitted California's diverse families and children. His leadership and education efforts have greatly improved practice and procedure in domestic violence cases. He was also instrumental in the development of the award-winning California Courts Protective Order Registry (CCPOR).

In 1989, Justice Kay served as a member of the first judicial education institute on criminal domestic violence, and he served as faculty for numerous similar programs for many years.

In 2005, he was appointed to chair the Domestic Violence Practice and Procedure Task Force. Under his leadership and through a broadly collaborative effort, the task force developed and revised 139 cutting-edge guidelines and procedures to improve the administration of justice in domestic violence cases.

In 2008, the task force presented final recommendations to the Judicial Council, which accepted the report. Justice Kay continued as task force chair, providing hands-on leadership to oversee implementation, and serving tirelessly for eight years, long after his retirement from the bench in 2005.

Among the many activities set in motion by this task force, nearly 200 education programs and workshops have been conducted to put the recommended guidelines and procedures into practice. The task force has had far-reaching impact, literally transforming how domestic violence cases are handled throughout California.

The California Courts Protective Order Registry got its start after a statewide symposium that Justice Kay convened on the difficulties faced in entering orders into a database then maintained by the Department of Justice. Justice Kay's foresight and the task force's recommendation to the Judicial Council led to the effort undertaken by the AOC to develop a statewide judicial branch registry, launched in 2010, which is now used by 31 courts, with plans for extending it statewide. CCPOR has won numerous awards for contributing to the safety of California's families.

Justice Kay served as a member of the Judicial Council in 2002 and as chair of the council's Rules and Projects Committee in 2004. Justice Kay's career on the bench spanned 24 years. First appointed to municipal court in San Francisco, he spent 17 years as a superior court judge, eventually handling presiding judge duties for criminal, mental health, and appellate divisions as well as probate court. He was appointed to the Court of Appeal, First Appellate District in 2000, and became presiding justice in 2002.

###

*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.*