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Sacramento County's Night Court Receives Statewide Recognition

California Association of Counties 2011 Challenge Award

SACRAMENTO, CA – The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) today presented an award to Sacramento County's Violation of Probation (VOP) In-Lieu Night Court at the Board of Supervisors meeting. The program was selected out of hundreds of entries throughout the state as part of CSAC's annual Challenge Award competition. These awards recognize programs that demonstrate effectiveness and efficiency in program and service delivery, and for the program's ability to be recreated by other counties to achieve similar results.

"We are honored to receive the 2011 CSAC Challenge Award. It acknowledges the value of the VOP In-Lieu Night Court, and more importantly, recognizes the creativity and extraordinary work of our criminal justice system partners," said Roberta MacGlashan, Chair of the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors.

Violation of Probation In-Lieu Night Court, or VOP Court, was implemented in January 2008 to help relieve congested court calendars and reduce overcrowding in Sacramento County's main jail while still holding probationers accountable for their criminal conduct. VOP Court takes cases where a defendant is already on felony probation for a prior non-violent, non-serious offense and resolves the case through a violation of probation instead of filing new charges. VOP Court establishes meaningful punishment for probation violators while rewarding those who do not re-offend. Over a two year period, VOP Court saved the County and Sacramento Superior Court \$12.6 million. VOP Court partners include the District Attorney, Sheriff, Public Defender, Conflict Criminal Defender, Probation, and Superior Court.

Jim Wiltshire, CSAC Deputy Director, presented the award to the Board of Supervisors and VOP Court representatives. "The Challenge Awards are about honoring innovation. When you have innovation, like Sacramento County's VOP Night Court that saves money, makes a process more efficient and protects your citizens, you have the best of all worlds," said Wiltshire.

This year, CSAC received nearly 250 Challenge Award entries for its four population categories. An independent panel of judges with expertise in county programs and challenges selected the award recipients. Overall, nine counties are being honored with Challenge Awards and another nine with Merit Awards.

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