



COUNTY of VENTURA

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Ventura County Board of Supervisors Approves Renaming Ventura Family Justice Center in Honor of Late Judge Colleen Toy White

VENTURA, Calif. – The Ventura County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved renaming the Ventura County Family Justice Center in Ventura as the Judge Colleen Toy White Family Justice Center, honoring the late Ventura County Superior Court Judge whose decades of public service transformed how the county supports victims and other vulnerable members of the community.



Hon. Colleen Toy White (1944-2021)

Judge White devoted 41 years to serving the people of Ventura County, including 18 years with the Ventura County District Attorney's Office, where she served for 10 years as Chief Assistant District Attorney. She was elected to the Ventura County Superior Court in 1994 and served 23 years on the bench before retiring in 2017. During her judicial career, she served as Presiding Judge, Assistant Presiding Judge and Family Law Supervising Judge.

"The naming of the Family Justice Center in memory of Judge White is a fitting tribute to her unwavering commitment to public service and her profound compassion, fairness, and pioneering work in establishing collaborative and specialty courts," said 1st District Supervisor Matt LaVere. "Judge White had a distinguished career spanning four decades during which she made significant positive impacts through her leadership, service, and commitment to the community."

Her legacy includes creating the Pro Per Clinic, which became the foundation for the court's Family Law Self-Help Center, and pioneering specialty courts and programs serving victims, seniors, veterans, families, and individuals struggling with addiction and mental health issues.

"Judge Colleen Toy White dedicated her career to making sure victims and vulnerable members of our community had a voice, access to justice and a path toward healing," District Attorney Erik

Nasarenko said. “The Family Justice Center represents so much of what Judge White stood for and is a lasting reminder of her commitment to compassion, dignity and justice.”

Judge White’s impact on victim services began during her time with the District Attorney’s Office. According to retired Superior Court Judge Patricia M. Murphy, who worked with Judge White and considered her a mentor and friend, White transformed the Victim Services Division to ensure victims had meaningful input in the prosecution of their offenders.

“Her vision for assistance to victims soon became a national model for other prosecutorial agencies,” Murphy wrote in her letter endorsing the renaming. She described Judge White as a “dedicated champion for victim’s rights, rehabilitation, mental health services, and access to justice.”

Former Ventura County District Attorney Michael D. Bradbury also endorsed the renaming, noting that many of Judge White’s innovations directly intersect with the work of today’s Family Justice Center. Bradbury highlighted Judge White’s pioneering work on programs including Veterans Court, Domestic Violence Court, the Self-Help Center and improving restraining order processes. He described her as someone whose compassion was “a core part of who she was.”

“The Family Justice Center is a reflection of Judge White’s vision for assistance to victims and her commitment to improving access to justice,” Bradbury wrote. “Renaming the center as the Colleen ‘Toy’ White Family Justice Center would be a fitting tribute to a woman whose life’s work embodied fairness, dignity, and service to others.”

The Ventura County Family Justice Center opened in 2019 as a centralized location where victims of crime and abuse can access comprehensive, trauma-informed services. Since opening, the center has helped more than 7,000 adults and children throughout Ventura County and currently serves approximately 1,200 victims each year.

Judge White was previously honored posthumously as a Champion for Hope by the Ventura County Family Justice Center Foundation, an award accepted by her husband, Arthur Bliss. In 2019, the Ventura County Veterans Court was also



Art Bliss speaks before the Board of Supervisors about his late wife, Colleen Toy White. Pictured with District Attorney Erik Nasarenko.

renamed the Judge Colleen Toy White Veterans Treatment Court in recognition of her contributions to veterans and the justice system.

“It’s been five years since she passed and we remember her every day,” Mr. Bliss said. “Her legacy continues with the specialty courts she developed, reflecting her philosophy of rehabilitation rather than incarceration.”

The newly named Judge Colleen Toy White Family Justice Center is located at 3170 Loma Vista Road in Ventura.