



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Redwood City, CA **DATE:** November 8, 2005

CONTACT: Hon. George A. Miram, Presiding Judge, 650-363-4511
Hon. Mark R. Forcum, Chair, Community Outreach Committee, 650-363-7835

Judges Teach High School Students About the Justice System

San Mateo County Superior Court Presiding Judge George A. Miram announced today that members of the judiciary will be teaching government classes around the county this month as part of its third annual Court in the Schools Day. During this event, judicial officers teach high school students using a case study based on a real criminal case.

“I learned so much from the judge,” according to a student during last year’s event, “he also completely changed my view of judges...he was extremely nice.” The program was the brainchild of Judge Mark R. Forcum, who developed the case study and the interactive classroom format to challenge misconceptions about the court system, teach students about the criminal justice system and convey the positive role of judges. “Part of what makes this program so wonderful is the opportunity for judges to go into the classroom and discuss how the system works and answer any questions that the students have. This program is a great example of the Court’s goal to educate the community we serve and we are happy to have such a positive, collaborative relationship with the schools,” Forcum noted.

“This educational initiative is aligned with our vision to bring the courts alive in the minds of our students” added John C. Fitton, the Court’s Executive Officer, “our judiciary and staff have become purposeful partners with the San Mateo County schools to build relationships with our youth –

these relationships have the potential to break down barriers, open minds and engage students with our court and justice systems in ways that go beyond the classroom.”

Court in the Schools Day started in the San Mateo Union High School District in Spring 2003 and has been expanded to include Sequoia Union High School District and two private schools. For the 2004-05 school year, ten judges visited twelve schools, serving more than 2,000 students. This semester, judicial officers will go to high schools in the Sequoia Union High School District, San Mateo Union High School District, Junipero Serra High School, and Sacred Heart Preparatory. The Court hopes to add more schools, including high schools in the Jefferson Union High School district, in the Spring.

###