

ATTORNEY NOTES . . .



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The Board of Directors of the ADDA is pleased to announce the recipients of the ADDA Awards for 2005. Every year, the ADDA honors the outstanding courtroom performance of the Deputies of this office by awarding "The Deputy District Attorney of the Year Award." The Deputy District Attorney of the Year for 2005 is Benny Osorio. Osorio is assigned to the Hardcore Gang Division. Since January of 2005, Benny has tried 7 murder cases and has convicted 11 defendants of first degree murder. Benny has consistently triumphed over a relentless stream of difficulties including complex legal issues and witness problems.

The ADDA also recognizes prosecutors whose careers embody excellence, or who have pursued their careers in a manner that brings exceptional honor to the profession of Criminal Prosecutor and fellow prosecutors. The ADDA recognizes these Prosecutors with the ADDA Career Achievement Award.

This year, we are pleased to announce that two individuals have been awarded this prestigious award. Ronald E. Bowers and Robert A. Dver are the recipients of the 2005 ADDA Career Achievement Award. Ron Bowers has had a distin-

guished, history-making career as a DDA, creating both the Trial Support and the Training Division. Rob Dver has had a career marked by noble self sacrifice, investing himself deeply in the cause of training and educating his colleagues during times of great crises.

And finally, the ADDA is pleased to announce that the 2005 District Attorney Investigator of the Year is Laurie Devine-Knieriem. A quiet, low key and modest person, Laurie is respected in the Bureau for her positive, tenacious attitude in the face of outrageous obstacles. Please join us in congratulating each recipient.

BENNY OSORIO NAMED DDA OF THE YEAR

Benny Osorio has blazed an unlikely path in his journey to becoming The 2005 Deputy District Attorney of the Year. Born in Barranquilla, Colombia, Benny arrived in Queens, New York after his family emigrated to the US. After attending Colgate University and Georgetown University Law Center, Benny settled into private practice and eventually joined the District Attorney's Office.

In February of 2005, Benny tried the case of People v. Norman, a tragic murder committed by an Eight Trey Gangster Crip. The defendant had been dating the step-daughter of the victim. The victim did not approve, and the night before the murder the victim and his son beat down the defendant and took away a gun from him. The next morning the defendant returned to converse with the victim's stepdaughter on the victim's front porch. The victim approached with his hand in his pocket.

As the victim began to take his hand out of his pocket, the defendant shot and killed him. The defense raised self defense claims, and was able to get the victim's step-daughter, the only witness to the shooting, to testify that she believed the victim was about to pull gun from his pocket. Benny artfully countered these claims and convinced the jury to convict the defendant of 1st Degree Murder.

Soon afterwards, Benny was again in trial in March of 2005 in People v. Kelly. In that case, the defendant shot and killed a victim who was leaving a party. The defendant presented a seemingly solid defense consisting of eyewitnesses, alibi witnesses and a respected eyewitness identification expert. Through rigorous cross-examination Benny dismantled this defense, obtaining a 1st Degree Murder conviction.

These murder cases were soon followed by People

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Bowers and Dver Share 2005 Career Achievement

Ronald Bowers: Legal Pioneer

Ron Bowers has experienced a distinguished career in the DA's Office since joining in 1967. More importantly, Ron has made history as a member of the District Attorney's Office, succeeding in changing both the DA's Office and the Criminal Justice System for the better.

Ron's first management position was as DIC of the Alhambra Office and there he confronted his first management problem: no office. Ron's car served as the first Alhambra Office. In time the County generously gave Ron a trailer to house his secretaries and DDAs. After several years he moved the Alhambra Office into a new courthouse. Then it was off to the Pasadena Branch Office where he had various assignments including supervising the intern program. The task of training and mentoring aspiring prosecutors seemed to come naturally to Ron. While running this program, Ron even supervised a young Steve Cooley

When John Van de Kamp became DA, he wanted Ron to assume the duties as DIC of the West Covina Area Office. There with the help of his staff, Ron uncovered a courthouse corruption scandal that resulted in the conviction and prison sentence of one of the judges and a prominent local defense attorney.

After his tenure as a DIC, Ron was made a Special Assistant for Branch & Area under Director Billy Webb. Ron studied the DA's Office from the ground up. While working as a Special Assistant, Ron was also given the task of trying several of the first death penalty cases under the new California law. Another of Ron's special projects was to try to find ways of modifying the Exclusionary Rule. In order to create public awareness, Ron created a film that illustrated the difficulties police officers had in understanding the rules of search and seizure. Word of the film spread and the TV program "60 Minutes" contacted Ron and asked him to help them write and produce a segment regarding the Exclusionary Rule called "Handcuffing the Cops." Later Ron conducted a survey illustrating the detrimental affect the Exclusionary Rule on so many criminal cases, especially narcotic cases. Ron's survey was used by the Solicitor General to argue for a modification of the Exclusionary Rule. The U. S. Supreme Court agreed and

the Good Faith exception was created which proved to be a major turning point in the history of the Criminal Justice System.

Ron continued to be a Special Assistant but this time for Curt Livesay. Ron was tasked with developing a new computer system for the DA's Office as part of the Office Automation project. Ron was able to design a computer system that became the cutting edge computer systems used throughout the nation. After his stint as a Special Assistant, Ron was given the job of Assistant Director in charge of the South County Branch and Area Offices, later he headed up the Norwalk Branch Office and Night Court.

After these assignments, Ron was given the challenging job of creating the new Prosecution Support and Training Division. This assignment permitted Ron to play a vital role in hiring and training the new deputies for our Office. Ron created training videos, updated the training manuals and crafted Saturday Seminars to be more meaningful to all the deputies.

Several years later, Ron was given another opportunity to create another division named the Trial Support Division. This proved to be even more challenging since this new Division had no office, no staff and no equipment. But Ron decided to make the most of this new assignment. Ron was the master of resourcefulness. He used rooms next to the old library, borrowed the library staff and found a discarded Mac computer. With this meager beginning Trial Support was born. Based on his own experiences trying cases and supervising trial deputies, Ron developed a state of the art method for creating trial exhibits called "Visuals on Demand." In order to speed the process, Ron designed a computer system called LA DAVA (Los Angeles District Attorney Visual Aids) which is a data base of the most common visuals used by trial deputies.

Ron has been recognized as a leader in the field of Trial Visuals. He has lectured on the subject throughout the state and nation. Most recently Ron was asked to lecture on the subject by the Ministry of Justice and Supreme Prosecutors Office. Ron's legacy to the Office and trial prosecutors will continue for many years to

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OSORIO: DDA of THE YEAR

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v. Monk. This case involved a defendant's who shot a victim, leaving him quadriplegic. A third person, who the victim identified as being at the crime scene, wrote out a lengthy confession, only to later recant. Benny handled the retrial of the case after a previous jury was unable to reach a verdict, and was soon confronted with witnesses who dramatically changed their stories. A key witness recanted and testified that the defendant was not even at the location. Even the victim was impeached by evidence

that he had misidentified several people who weren't even involved in the case. Nonetheless, Benny's plain spoken appeal to common sense convinced the jurors of the defendant's guilt, and the jury convicted him of Attempted First Degree Murder

A few weeks later Benny was again trial in People v. Medina et al. This case involved an attack by four thugs on a lone victim. The victim managed to fight off the assailants and was attempting to drive away when one of them shot and killed him. The only witness to the shooting had been boozing and using methamphetamine and was caught lying to the police in the early stages of the investigation. Although

Benny convinced one of the thugs to testify against the others in exchange for a plea bargain, the judge did not allow the plea. But Benny fought on and contrasted the conduct of that defendant with the other 3, obtaining First Degree Murder convictions against the shooter and two assailants under a natural and probable consequence theory. Benny has continued his string of victories into 2006, winning six more murder convictions. Benny's dauntless and fearless trial performance in the Hardcore Gang Division has led to his being honored as the 2005 Deputy District Attorney of the Year. Con-

Laurie Devine-Knieriem Named 2005 DA Investigator of the Year

Laurie Devine-Knieriem is the ADDA 2005 District Attorney Investigator of the Year. Laurie is respected within the Bureau of Investigation for her positive and tenacious attitude. She is being recognized for the *People v. Mack and Wallace*, a triumph for the People of California.

This case began in the garbage, literally. In February of 2002, a box of fraudulent insurance claim documents was fished out of a garbage dumpster after being discarded by Timothy Mack, a subject under surveillance. Laurie who was assigned to the Auto Insurance Fraud Task Force, jumped at the chance to investigate the box's contents. But this investigation was regarded as a "dog," and it was presumed that the real focus would be to find a way to pressure Timothy Mack and other subjects who were suspected, in a double murder.

Laurie took on an investigation that probably would have died on the vine. She systematically dissected the box's contents, then methodically sought and gathered evidence against Mack, celebrity attorney Angela Wallace, and 23 other suspects. Mack actively recruited players for

staged accidents and sent them for phony treatments to three bogus clinics he operated. He copped his cases to several attorneys and chiropractors who processed a steady stream of fake medical claims orchestrated by Mack.

Laurie authored and supervised warrants that uncovered an enormous cache of evidence. Her tenacity resulted in the filing of 7 felony cases, involving 25 defendants and over 147 felony counts. For almost 6 months she spent a majority of her time testifying or appearing in court, spending her days off tracking witnesses or gathering evidence.

In December of 2002, Mack and Wallace were convicted of embezzling more than \$380,000 from a life insurance settlement owed to two brothers who had retained Wallace after their mother died from a brain tumor. Even after the embezzlement convictions, Laurie continued to investigate the case despite the fact that she was going through the pregnancies and births of both

her children.

On March 21, 2006, a jury found Mack guilty of three counts of murder, two of these counts arose were for the murders of the two brothers from whom Wallace and Mack embezzled. Mack's convictions rest heavily on the evidence developed by Laurie.

DDA Ron Goudy of the Organized Crime Division wrote about Laurie's skill and determination: "Laurie has taken a case which has covered four years of fraud and has condensed it into a workable, prosecutable case. . . Her hard work has resulted in seven cases being filed with twenty-five defendants. . . This case has been tied to two other investigations, a real estate fraud, and a murder."

For her Herculean efforts and determination, Laurie is the ADDA 2005 District Attorney Investigator of the Year.

2005 Career Achievement Honors both Rob Dver and Ron

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come. We are pleased to honor him with the 2005 ADDA Career Achievement Award.

Rob Dver: Educator, Leader, Mentor.

Rob Dver joined the DA's Office after graduating from the University of Virginia and Northwestern University Law School. Although Rob is an accomplished trial attorney who has tried over 100 jury trials, Rob's fellow Deputies have chosen to honor him for his contributions outside the courtroom.

Promotional examinations bring extreme stress to eligible candidates. Rob has responded by fostering a sense of camaraderie and calm among his fellow DDA's during these times of crisis.

In 1996, Rob began leading a study group of fellow Grade 3 DDAs, who were studying for the Grade 4 exam. A group of 10 San Fernando DDAs who had been housed in Van Nuys due to the Northridge earthquake were meeting as a study group during lunch in the cafeteria. With a murder trial approaching, Rob asked the other members of the group if he could lead the study sessions. Rob began plowing through the Penal and Evidence Codes. The sessions were so effective that one of the group members taped and shared them with other Deputies, who in turn shared them with their colleagues. Rob's lectures soon became an essential study aid in preparing for the exam.

Rob's dedication his fellow Deputies did not stop after he was promoted to Grade 4. In 1999, Rob again conducted reviews of legal policy, evidence, criminal law and criminal procedure during his lunch break for Deputies studying for the Grade 4 exam. In 2000, he did the same for colleagues studying for the Grade 3 exam.

When another Grade 4 exam was scheduled in 2005, Rob responded by conducting exam preparation classes in two locations. For nearly 2 months, Rob held lunch sessions 2 days a week in San Fernando and 2 weekly sessions after work in the CSFCJ. The downtown sessions were so popular that people stood in the back or sat against walls. Those who couldn't attend had others record the lectures.

Rob sacrificed much of his time to help everyone. He fostered a dynamic that encouraged sharing and helping. Yet Rob never asked for remuneration or recognition.

In gratitude for his outstanding efforts Rob was nominated for this award. But Rob's nomination was not just submitted by one or two deputies, but by several dozen of his colleagues who signed petitions in support of his nomination.

Rob is now the Assistant Head of the Training Division, a perfect assignment for someone who has done so much to educate the

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Reach us by Mail!

18000 Clara Shortridge Foltz
Criminal Justice Center
210 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

ADDA Phone: 213-974-ADDA

Email: theverdict@sbcglobal.net

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**SAVE THE
DATE !**

The ADDA Awards Dinner
Thursday, October 19, 2006
The Bunker Hill Room
**The Omni Los Angeles Hotel at California
Plaza**

251 S. Figueroa, Los Angeles
For Directions call (213) 617-3300.

No Host Bar: 5pm,
Dinner 6:45pm.

Tickets

\$65.00-Members of law enforcement
agencies, including DA employees and
their guests.

\$75-All others.

Invitations to be mailed to all DDA's the
week of September 25, 2006
RSVPs due October 15, 2006.