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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Board of Supervisors Present Resolution for Neighborhood Court  
Supervisor Don Saylor will recognize volunteers and the DA's Office.**

(Woodland, CA) – January 13, 2014 – Yolo County Supervisor Don Saylor will present a Board of Supervisor's Resolution in recognition of the District Attorney's Neighborhood Court program and its committed group of community volunteers at the Board of Supervisor's meeting on January 14, 2014, at 11 am. The Resolution specifically honors and recognizes volunteers including Rebecca Challender, Diane Clarke, Jonathan Corbett, Robb Davis, Elvia Garcia, Jeannette Lejardi, Judith MacBrine, Manuel Medeiros, and Janet Regnell, all of whom were critical contributors to the establishment of Neighborhood Court in Davis. The Resolution concludes "that the Yolo County Board of Supervisors expresses sincere appreciation and gratitude for the vision, leadership and organization shown by Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig and District Attorney Chris Bulkeley and support staff from the District Attorney's office, the Davis Police Department, the UC Davis Police Department as well as tremendous thanks to all the volunteers for their dedicated service to the citizens of Yolo County in volunteering with the Neighborhood Court Program."

District Attorney Jeff Reisig, in partnership with the Davis Police Department and the UC Davis Police Department, launched Neighborhood Court in the City of Davis and at UC Davis in June, 2013. Neighborhood Court is a new adult criminal offender diversion program based on restorative justice. Neighborhood Court seeks to address nonviolent and low-level crimes through community-based solutions to swiftly redress the harm caused by such offenses outside of the traditional criminal justice system. The purpose of the program is to address criminal violations that impact the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Neighborhood Court is an alternative to Criminal Court. Instead of charging cases for criminal prosecution, the District Attorney's Office may refer certain criminal cases (misdemeanors and infractions) to a panel of community volunteers who comprise the Neighborhood Court.

Neighborhood Court utilizes restorative justice concepts which identify crime as acts that cause harm to people and communities. Emphasis is placed on the offender voluntarily accepting responsibility for his conduct and repairing the harm done to the victim and the community. Another goal of Neighborhood Court is for all parties to

understand the root cause of the crime so that appropriate agreements can be entered into to help rehabilitate the offender and ensure the conduct is not repeated. Ultimately, Neighborhood Court is a process that has the potential for the victim, the offender and the community to communicate directly with each other in a safe environment and work on repairing the harm in a way that will allow all the parties to move forward in a positive direction as equal members of our community.

To be eligible for Neighborhood Court, an offender must not be on probation or parole, pending any other criminal charges, and must not have a criminal history. Only certain offenses (some misdemeanors and infractions) are eligible for Neighborhood Court. Neighborhood Court is designed to resolve cases quickly and in the best interest of the victim and community.

Since its inception, Neighborhood Court, under the direction of Deputy District Attorney Chris Bulkeley, has recruited and trained over 73 volunteers who are panelists and facilitators. Volunteer Joe Schwartz commented “it’s very exciting to be part of a program that’s helping people get their lives together and restore their place in the Davis/UCD community. The Neighborhood Court Program is making a valuable contribution to Yolo County’s criminal justice system.”

In the past eight months, in excess of 150 offenders have had conferences, 114 offenders have completed the program, 37 are pending completion and only two offenders have failed the program. One offender stated “I really appreciate that a program like Neighborhood Court exists in the community. I think treating cases like mine in this more intimate, reflective manner is much more effective than a full on criminal court.”

Neighborhood Court has recently successfully transitioned from community based offenses to include cases where individual citizens are victims of crimes such as battery, theft, vandalism and trespassing. This fall, three victims chose to participate in Neighborhood Court Victim Offender Conferences. They were given the opportunity to express directly to the offender how the offender’s criminal conduct personally affected them. One victim stated, “I enjoyed the positive outcome and insightful process. I learned a lot and it provided me with an opportunity to improve my patience.”

Neighborhood Court is expanding into the City of West Sacramento in 2014. The program will be introduced on February 20<sup>th</sup> from 7-9 pm at the West Sacramento Library followed by the recruitment and training of volunteers.

**For more information**, contact the District Attorney at [neighborhoodcourt@yolocounty.org](mailto:neighborhoodcourt@yolocounty.org) or (530) 681-6323. Or, visit [www.yoloda.org](http://www.yoloda.org).

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