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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**District Attorney's DUI Program Gets Grant Funds**  
**The CA Office of Traffic Safety awarded the DA's Office over \$180,000 for its DUI program**

(Woodland, CA) – November 7, 2014- Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced today that the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) has awarded the District Attorney's Office \$ 184,073 for the continuation of its DUI vertical prosecution unit. The Unit, which was formed in 2012, focuses on the most serious and complex DUI cases, such as those involving injury and death, and those involving drug impairment. The Unit is led by Deputy District Attorney Matt De Moura and DA Investigator John Shugart. The funding for the Unit allows De Moura to handle a case through all stages of the criminal process, from the time of the arrest through sentencing. Additionally, the funding also allows the team to assist law enforcement in the investigation of fatal and major injury collisions.

DUI prosecution has always been a priority of the District Attorney's Office because of the danger they pose to the public. "Once an individual enters a car and is impaired, everyone is a potential victim. At that point, the driver isn't in control of what could happen on the road," stated De Moura. According to Chief Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Raven, the District Attorney's Office prosecutes thousands of DUIs each year, from misdemeanor offenses to DUI murder cases. The geographic layout of Yolo County, which includes the traversing of the County by Interstate 80 and Interstate 5, contributes to the high percentage of DUI cases, noted Raven.

While many of the DUI cases are alcohol-related, the Office has seen a steady increase in the number of drug-related DUIs in the county. Drivers are commonly being found under the influence of marijuana, prescription drugs, illegal street drugs, such as methamphetamine and heroin, or a combination of drugs and alcohol. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's 2007 National Roadside Survey, more than 16 percent of weekend, nighttime drivers tested positive for illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter drugs. More than 11 percent tested positive for illicit drugs. "Drug impairment, whether it be prescription pills or marijuana, is just as dangerous as alcohol impairment. Just because a doctor prescribes a drug doesn't mean an individual can drive with that drug in his or her system," stated De Moura.

The Unit, however, does not just prosecute impaired drivers. Part of its funding is directed towards training law enforcement and on community outreach. De Moura and

Shugart, who have both attended the internationally renowned Drug Recognition Expert program, work with the State's Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor Program to train law enforcement in drug-impaired driving. In addition, in mid-2014, the Unit launched its "DUI in the Schools" Program. This program brings real DUI trials to local high schools so that students can see firsthand how the criminal justice system works and the consequences of driving under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. Too often young people get caught up in drugs or alcohol and then get behind the wheel of a car. This program is designed to show youth the dangers of DUI and the negative effects it can have on their lives. The hope is that by seeing a trial firsthand, they will make good choices and be successful in their endeavors. The team held its first trial at Pioneer High School in Woodland this past May. This past Thursday, the team coordinated and conducted a live trial at Davis High School with over 500 students in attendance (see recent article in November 7 edition of the Davis Enterprise written by Lauren Keene). In the near future, the team will bring the program to Woodland High School. There are plans to have trials at other schools in the County during 2015.

District Attorney Jeff Reisig expressed his gratitude for the state funding. "Impaired driving is a problem that poses unjustifiable and dangerous risk to everyone on the road. This funding from OTS will allow us to continue our efforts on eradicating this problem and protecting the lives of Yolo County citizens every time they get behind the wheel of their car. Through outreach, training, and prosecution, we can hope to make impaired driving a thing of the past," said Reisig.

The purpose of the program is to prevent impaired driving and reduce alcohol and drug-impaired traffic fatalities and injuries. Funding for the program comes from a grant by the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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