



# COUNTY OF YOLO

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## Yolo County's Public Defender Yesterday and Today

(Woodland, CA) – For the third consecutive year, Yolo County Public Defender Barry Melton has been recognized in the publication, *Northern California Super Lawyers*, as being among the top five percent of northern California lawyers. This year the magazine featured Mr. Melton in a special section entitled “From the ‘60s to the Sixties” which highlighted Mr. Melton’s social activism in the 1960s as the aquatic member of the band County Joe & The Fish, to today as he heads the Yolo County Public Defender’s office.

After the Summer of Love and Woodstock, despite never having attended law school, Barry Melton passed the bar and began his criminal defense career with an internship in the San Francisco Public Defender’s office, followed by 12 years of criminal defense law practice in San Francisco. He then served in the Mendocino County Public Defender’s office before moving to the State Public Defender’s Office in Sacramento. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Melton began his tenure with Yolo County as Chief Deputy Public Defender, and quickly moved into the role of Public Defender in 2000.

“Barry Melton is truly a Yolo County treasure,” said Yolo County Board of Supervisors Chair Mariko Yamada. “He is at once passionate and compassionate in his pursuit of justice, and he personifies the title of Public Defender.”

More recently, Mr. Melton has continued to expand the minds of those around him with the Yolo County Public Defender’s Office Intern Training Academy. University of the Pacific’s McGeorge School of Law notes that this intern program is their school’s highest rated program, and consequently, has made it part of their presentation at a national conference for law school internship coordinators.

“Our legal interns do a tremendous service to our clients and are an incredible asset to our lawyers. Some of our best research and writing is done by our legal interns,” said Yolo County Public Defender Barry Melton. “Beyond the legal interns our program also includes social worker interns who often make it possible for our clients to choose alternatives to incarceration that offer the real possibility of turning their lives around.”

At a recent meeting of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors Mr. Melton introduced Intern Training Academy leaders, Deputy Public Defender Josh Kaizuka and Assistant Chief Deputy Public Defender Tracie Olson, who introduced this year’s crop of legal interns:

Three of the interns are from U.C. Davis’ King Hall School of Law, and include Intern Jessica Falk, who has completed her second year. Her experience includes an internship at the immigration clinic at U.C.

Davis, legal research for Sacramento Superior Court, and serving as law clerk for a private criminal defense attorney. She has also designed and conducted experiments on eyewitness lineup accuracy and has served as a diversion panel member of the Oceanside Juvenile Justice Center.

Intern Shay Fluharty has completed her first year at King Hall. She has a masters in teaching and, as part of a national service corps, has taught in the low-performing south side of Chicago and at a remedial summer program for secondary students in Watts. She has volunteered with Big Brothers Big Sisters, assisted at a pediatric AIDS facility and helped the International Rescue Committee with refugee and asylum cases.

Intern Bina Ghanaat has completed her first year at King Hall where she was a member of the King Hall National Mock Trial Team. She was a legal intern at Renters' Legal Assistance in Berkeley and has computer consultant experience.

Five of the interns are from University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law. Intern Brian Lee has completed his second year at McGeorge. He has been working with the Public Defender's office for almost a year and has been assigned to work on a death penalty case with attorneys Tracie Olson and Allison Zuvela.

Intern Jessica Mankus has completed her second year with McGeorge School of Law. She graduated from Wellesley College in Massachusetts where she was on the varsity fencing team. Her experience includes working as a research assistant and working in a family business. Last summer she attended a class in Fundamental Rights in Europe conducted by Justice Anthony M. Kennedy in Salzburg, Austria.

Intern Preston Morgan has completed his first year with McGeorge School of Law. He has a MFA in acting from the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco and has produced off-Broadway theater. His experience includes an internship at the Public Defender's Office in San Francisco and volunteering at the Eviction Defense Collaborative.

Intern Tina Poley has completed her second year with McGeorge School of Law. Her experience includes participating in the Katrina-Gideon Project in New Orleans, where law students volunteered to interview pre-trial detainees who were impacted by the backlog created by Hurricane Katrina. Tina also volunteers at the Human Rights Fair Housing Commission in Sacramento.

Intern Jennifer Soares has completed her first year with McGeorge School of Law. She has worked with several law offices in Southern California where she did case research, assisted in client interviews and acted as a liaison with the courthouse clerk. She has also worked as a recruitment manager for the U.C. Davis Annual fund where she recruited and trained 200 student ambassadors and raised over \$150,000 for the fund.

Intern Timothy Carlin has completed his first year at University of Dayton's School of Law in Ohio. His work experience includes being a security analyst for the U.S. Air Force and a business credit analyst with American Express. He also works with inner city youth in Dayton and volunteers as a youth soccer coach.

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