



Riverside County District Attorney
NEWS RELEASE

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**MICHAEL HESTRIN NAMED TOP PROSECUTOR IN THE STATE
BY CALIFORNIA DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION**

RIVERSIDE – The California District Attorneys Association has named Riverside County Senior Deputy District Attorney Michael Hestrin its 2009 Outstanding Prosecutor for a large county.

Since 2005, this is the third prosecutor from Riverside County who has received this statewide recognition.

Hestrin was recently selected by the association's 18-member board of directors which is comprised of elected district attorneys and deputy district attorneys across California.

"We really look closely at all the nominees," said Scott Thorpe, the association's chief executive officer. "And this was just a real clear choice."

Among the criteria for selection are the prosecutor's outstanding ability and personal sacrifice to get the job done.

"We've built an experienced, professional and dedicated staff here which is exemplified by Michael Hestrin," Riverside County District Attorney Rod Pacheco said. "He is an example of all the dedicated men and women of this office."

In 2009, Hestrin prosecuted two cases which ended with death penalty sentences. The first was the trial of Raymond Lee Oyler, a serial arsonist whose actions in October 2006 led to the murders of five U.S. Forest Service firefighters who were killed while battling the huge blaze. The trial received international media attention and has led other prosecuting agencies to now also seek the death penalty in large arson fires in which people are killed.

Hestrin spent another 49 days in a trial which resulted in a dangerous shot caller for the Mexican Mafia and a leader of a Riverside criminal street gang, George Hernandez, being sentenced to death for the murder of a fellow gang member. Hernandez shot the victim in the top of his head while he leaned into Hernandez's car, and then shot him three more times as he fell back.

Hestrin, 39, has been with the Riverside County District Attorney's Office for 12 years and has prosecuted about two dozen murder cases, five being death penalty cases.

"I am deeply appreciative and humbled by being recognized by my colleagues statewide," Hestrin said. "This is an honor for me and our office."

Earlier this year, Hestrin became the first person in the history of the Riverside County DA's Office to be named the countywide Prosecutor of the Year three times.

Hestrin will receive his statewide award at the CDAA annual conference to be held July 1, 2010, in Monterey, Calif.