



Superior Court of California County of Riverside

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Riverside County Judges Elect New Presiding Judge and Assistant

Riverside County: Riverside County Superior Court judges have elected Judge Richard Fields as the court's next Presiding Judge and Judge Thomas Cahraman as Assistant Presiding Judge. The presiding judge, with the assistance of the court executive officer, is responsible for leading the court, establishing policies, and allocating resources in a manner that promotes access to justice for all members of the public. The judges will begin a two-year term in January 2007.

Richard Fields has presided in the courts of Riverside County for over fifteen years, as both a judge and a commissioner, hearing traffic arraignments, traffic trials, misdemeanor arraignments, felony arraignments, and misdemeanor and felony jury trials, including a variety of murder cases, and has handled both the master arraignment and trial readiness calendars. He has served as chair of the court's Drug Court Oversight Committee and as drug court judge for a two-year period. Additionally, Judge Fields has handled a civil trial calendar as well as unlawful detainer and small claims calendars. Currently, he is presiding over a general criminal trial calendar.

Judge Fields has dedicated himself to community service in both his personal and professional life. Soon after receiving his law degree from Western State University College of Law in 1983, he was awarded a Reginald Heber Smith Fellowship, joining a legacy of approximately 2,300 bright young lawyers who between 1967 and 1985 committed themselves to providing legal aid to the poor. As a member and past president of the Riverside Sunrise Rotary Club, he has mentored students, organized community immunization drives, assisted at the Inland AIDS Walk, and sent students to leadership camp. As a member of the Corona Youth Advisory Group, he has helped youngsters in the community achieve academic excellence. He has also been a Mock Trial judge and judicial mentor for approximately 14 years.

Judge Fields has also made numerous contributions to the African-American community. Among them, he has been a guest lecturer on Afro-Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Riverside. In 2003, he was the guest speaker for the Riverside NAACP's 54th Annual Freedom Fund Banquet. In 2004, he spoke on the Riverside Court House steps in a special program commemorating the 50th anniversary of the landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Judge Fields has also presided as the grand marshal of both the Riverside and Moreno Valley Black History Parades.

Commenting on his upcoming term, Judge Fields stated, "Our judges are working at an extraordinary level of efficiency. My goal is to maintain that outstanding effort. I also intend to work diligently toward securing for us the additional judges and resources needed to give the people appearing in our courts the time and the access that they deserve."

Judge Thomas Cahraman, the assistant presiding judge-elect, received his law degree from the University of California, Berkeley in 1976 and practiced law in Riverside for 25 years before his appointment to the bench in 2001. As a judge he has served in criminal, family law, and civil assignments. When asked about his new position, Judge Cahraman responded, "I'm honored that my colleagues have asked me to assume this role. We've been blessed with excellent leadership throughout my time on the court, and now we have an exceptionally qualified Presiding Judge in Richard Fields. We have one of the busiest courts in the nation, and it will be my job to assist Judge Fields in any way I can. I also look forward to working with our outstanding staff." Judge Cahraman will continue to conduct court proceedings in addition to his new administrative duties.

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