

Justice & Diversity Center Honors Outstanding Volunteers

March 10, 2016 -- San Francisco -- The Justice & Diversity Center of The Bar Association of San Francisco (JDC) celebrated its top volunteers at its annual Outstanding Volunteer Celebration on March 9. With volunteer assistance, JDC provides legal representation, and related social services, to over 9,000 low-income and homeless clients a year. Volunteers also help JDC give 700 students counseling, coaching and mentoring in efforts to increase diversity in the legal profession.

More than 200 people attended the event, held at The Green Room in San Francisco. JDC honored volunteers of its Pro Bono Legal Services, Homeless Advocacy Project and Diversity Educational Programs.

Chief Justice of California Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye greeted awardees and provided inspirational remarks at the awards ceremony.

JDC Board President Michael Tubach, O'Melveny & Myers, also made remarks and congratulated awardees. JDC honored the top 15 percent of its 2015 volunteers with Outstanding Volunteer Certificates. JDC also recognized three individual volunteers and a law firm with special awards.

Betsy Johnsen received the 2015 James P. Prevolos Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Services in Family Law. Ms. Johnsen provides full-scope representation to low-income family law litigants, and mentors other pro bono attorneys. JDC presented the 2015 Housing Justice Award to Sebastian Kaplan, Fenwick & West, for his dedication to low-income tenants facing eviction, both as limited-scope and full-scope counsel.

JDC gave the 2015 Community Service Award to Debra Brown, Senior Paralegal at Bank of America, for her commitment to volunteering with JDC at Project Homeless Connect.

Morrison & Foerster received the 2015 Outstanding Law Firm in Public Service Award for its pro bono support of JDC's Pro Bono Legal Service Programs and Homeless Advocacy Project, as well as several Diversity Educational Programs.