



NEWS RELEASE

**Los Angeles Superior Court
Public Information Office**

Website: www.LACourt.org

E-mail Address: PublicInfo@LACourt.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 2, 2016

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL HONORS LASC AND PARTNERS FOR TEEN COURT SHADES PROGRAM

At its meeting on Aug. 26, the Los Angeles City Council honored the Los Angeles Superior Court (LASC) and the Museum of Tolerance for their partnership and work concerning the SHADES program. Non-profit group Parents, Educators & Students in Action (PESA) was also honored for its support of SHADES.

SHADES, which is an acronym for Stop Hate and Delinquency by Empowering Students, is a specialized program that is part of LASC's Teen Court program, an alternative early-intervention program that allows eligible juvenile offenders to be questioned, judged, and sentenced by a jury of their peers. Currently, more than 20,000 students, 60 judicial officers, and 50 volunteer attorneys and law school students participate in 38 active high-school-based Teen Courts throughout Los Angeles County.

Teen Court SHADES cases specifically involve juvenile offenders who have engaged in bias-motivated crimes, hate incidents, and bullying due to a victim's race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or gender. Student jurors who hear SHADES cases undergo an intensive, week-long training at the Museum of Tolerance to develop an understanding of issues and problems related to diversity, prejudice, hate, and bullying and to learn the skills sets to help effectively adjudicate these crimes and hate incidents.

SHADES benefits young people by addressing the root of their prejudice, by allowing them to complete a six-month probationary sentence to avoid having a criminal record, and by providing an alternative to expulsion or transfer to another school. SHADES benefits campus administration by addressing the roots of campus tension and violence so as to prevent future incidents.

-more -

As an innovative and alternative model for juvenile justice, SHADES has received several awards for its contributions to the Los Angeles community. Los Angeles County is one of the most diverse populations in the world, presenting more than 3.5 the number of hate crimes per person than other state in the United States. One third of those are committed by young people under the age of 18. Eleven percent are committed in a school setting. Through SHADES, the Court provides an important resource for the community by steering youth away from violent acts committed out of ignorance and hate.

“Our Teen Court and SHADES programs are a community response to a community problem led by dedicated judicial leaders striving to make Los Angeles a better and safer place to live,” said Judge David S. Wesley, LASC Teen Court judge and co-founder of the program.

SHADES trials are conducted year round primarily in the Stanley Mosk Courthouse in downtown Los Angeles and may in the future be conducted in other Los Angeles County courthouses as well. The jury is comprised of students from various high schools. In June 2014, 68 youth jurors received training to be SHADES jurors.

For more information about LASC’s SHADES program, visit the Community Outreach section of the Court’s website at lacourt.org or call the Court’s Public Information Office at (213) 830-0815.

###