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DA Hate Crimes Prosecutor Honored with Anti-Defamation League's 'Sherwood Prize for Combatting Hate'

Deputy DA Abigail Dillon Leads DA's Hate Crimes Unit

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) said today that Deputy District Attorney Abigail Dillon, who leads the DA's Hate Crimes Unit, was awarded the Anti-Defamation League's prestigious, statewide Sherwood Prize for Combatting Hate, at a ceremony in Los Angeles. The organization cited Dillon's innovative, proactive and reactive work within the DA's Office and in the larger community, as well as her unwavering dedication to fighting hatred and bigotry.

The Los Angeles Anti-Defamation League's Sherwood Prize recognizes law enforcement officers who put their lives on the line to protect Americans from extremism, terrorism and hate. Specifically, the prize gives recognition to law enforcement professionals who are so committed to their work that they make a significant difference in their communities and serve as role models for their departments. In announcing the award, the League said Dillon's work underscores the important idea that each person can make a significant difference in combating prejudice and discrimination.

"Lead Hate Crimes prosecutor Abbie Dillon exemplifies this prestigious statewide award by her deep commitment to bringing to justice and holding those accountable who harm others based on their religion, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation or disability," DA Stephan said. "She has played a pivotal role in nearly tripling the number of hate crime prosecutions across San Diego County and is also dedicated to the prevention of hate crimes through training and education. She is very deserving of this coveted award."

In her role as head of the Hate Crimes Unit, Dillon has prosecuted about 80 hate crime-related cases. She has also trained various law enforcement agencies, detectives, dispatchers, professionals, and area organizations on how to identify and respond to potential hate crimes and how to appropriately interact with individuals who have been victimized because of their actual or perceived status. She speaks at community forums where law enforcement interacts with community members and she has organized a statewide training for the California District

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Attorneys Association to provide resources to smaller offices that do not have the same resources.

Some of Deputy DA Dillon's recent cases include the prosecution of a defendant responsible for attacking a homeless shelter and repeatedly using a racial slur, which resulted in a nine-year prison sentence. She also prosecuted a defendant for a transphobic attack and handled the case of vandals who shot a gel pellet gun at various establishments in Hillcrest, known for its strong LGBTQ community. She also prosecuted several cases involving threats, vandalism and attacks on synagogues, a rabbi and Jewish organizations.

"My office has prioritized the prosecution of hate crimes with a specialized team led by Abbie Dillon because hate crimes leave a ripple effect of fear and pain, not just for the targeted victim, but for all those who share in the victim's targeted characteristic," DA Stephan said.

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.

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