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DA Receives Red Ribbon Lifetime Achievement Award for Her Efforts in Drug Abuse Prevention, Education

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) was honored this week at the Drug Enforcement Administration's Red Ribbon Awards Luncheon with the *Frank Goldsmith Lifetime Achievement Award* for her tireless work and dedication to keeping San Diego County safer and healthier through the prevention of crime, including education about harmful and often deadly, illicit substances.



“It is such an honor to receive this recognition, especially because it is awarded by an organization that honors the legacy of a hero, slain DEA Agent Enrique ‘Kiki’ Camarena whose legacy created the largest national drug awareness campaign to save lives— Red Ribbon Week,” said DA Stephan. **“This award is a testament to the relentless work of my DA Team, collaborating with our law enforcement and community partners on our shared goal of saving the lives of children and adults from illicit and deadly drugs such as fentanyl and methamphetamine. I’m honored to be in the company of the other awardees that serve our community.”**

Some of DA Stephan’s specific efforts that were recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award, include the following:

- DA Stephan worked with the DEA to create the first of its kind, multi-agency, Overdose Response Team, known as Narcotics Task Force Team 10. This task force revolutionized how drug deaths were investigated and prosecuted in San Diego County and has served as a model for law enforcement and prosecution offices throughout the nation.
- While remaining committed to holding drug traffickers accountable through aggressive, ethical, and fair prosecution, DA Stephan has always recognized not only the value but the necessity of prevention efforts when it comes to substance use.
- DA Stephan spearheaded the creation of the San Diego Opioid Project, a data-driven, innovative, sustained public awareness campaign that generated more than 46 million impressions and 3.8 million social media engagements.

- Under DA Stephan’s leadership, the role of Community Partnership Prosecutor was created to interact directly with the public to learn about their specific concerns and needs, and provide workable solutions and education, including substance use and overdose prevention.
- Prosecutors in the DA’s Major Narcotics Division regularly speak to members of the community about the harms caused by illicit fentanyl and other harmful controlled substances.
- DA Stephan has partnered with experts from a variety of fields, including education, medicine, law enforcement, treatment, and prevention. Together with these partners, she has and continues to organize community events, personally addressing audiences of students, parents, teachers, congregations, and other community groups and members about the risks and harm caused by illicit substances. The presentations occur both online and in-person with one goal in mind – saving lives.

Other awardees at the Red Ribbon Luncheon included William Perno from SAY San Diego who received the *Excellence in Prevention Advocacy Award*, the Juvenile Drug Smuggling Prevention Program received the *Outstanding Prevention Program Award*, the Camp Pendleton Substance Assessment Counseling Center, Drug Demand Reduction Program received the *Deb Nixon Education Award*, San Diego Superior Court Judge Enrique Camarena, Jr. received the *Justice System Community Excellence Award*; Detective Nathan Parga from San Diego Police Department received the *Enrique “Kiki” Camarena Law Enforcement Award*.

Red Ribbon Week is celebrated annually October 23 to 31 by the Drug Enforcement Administration and communities across the country to highlight the importance of a drug-free life. Inspired by the tragic death of local DEA Special Agent Enrique “Kiki” Camarena, this week of remembrance has helped spread awareness of drug misuse prevention and serves as an opportunity for parents, educators, and communities to reinforce the drug-free messages they share with their children throughout the year.

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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.