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DA's Human Resources and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Chief Honored by Japanese American Citizens League

Jerri Takada Malana Received Civil Rights Leadership Award for Efforts to Improve Civic Education in Schools

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) said today that the DA's Chief of Human Resources and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has been awarded the Civil Rights Leadership Award by the San Diego Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). Jerrilyn "Jerri" Malana received the honor at the San Diego JACL's annual awards gala on Saturday, October 7 at Sycuan Hotel & Casino.

Malana was recognized for her work on improving civic education and civic engagement in the community. She is the Chair of the Civic Engagement & Outreach Committee for the California Lawyers Association. Malana is also an active member of the Civic Learning Partnership for San Diego County, which seeks to improve civic education in grades K to 12. She is a former member of the statewide Power of Democracy steering committee, which promotes civic education initiatives. Malana was also a founding Advisory Board member for the Academy of Law at Crawford High School in San Diego.

"Jerri Malana's tireless work in the community to improve the lives and learning of students across the county focused on civic education, an essential building block to democracy, is impressive. She is well-deserving of this special award by the JACL— one of the oldest civil rights organizations in our nation," said DA Stephan. "I'm very proud of Jerri's civic commitment and we are very fortunate to have her providing outstanding leadership inside and outside our office."

Malana was the first Asian Pacific American attorney to serve as President of the San Diego County Bar Association, which is the region's oldest and largest legal organization. She is a past President of Pan Asian Lawyers of San Diego. Malana served on the Board of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association. She is a past member of the State Bar of California's Council

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on Access & Fairness, which works on diversity and inclusion matters. Malana also served on the Executive Committee of the Bench-Bar Coalition (BBC) in California.

The mission of the San Diego Japanese American Citizens League is to actively advocate for universal civil rights and social justice. They do this through fostering cross-cultural awareness and understanding, as well as preserving and cultivating the heritage and legacy of the Japanese American experience in San Diego and the U.S. The JACL is recognized for its dedication to the Japanese American community by supporting social wellness, providing cultural and educational programs for the youth, promoting communication between local Japanese American organizations, and responding to the needs, concerns, and ideas of the people in the greater San Diego region, who share a common bond of Japanese heritage.

Malana has been a Chief Deputy District Attorney at the DA's Office since 2016. She serves as Chief of Human Resources and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and as Special Counsel. The San Diego County District Attorney's Office is ranked #6 on Zippia's "Best Government Companies to Work For" in San Diego.

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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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