

HALL OF JUSTICE
330 WEST BROADWAY
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101
(619) 531-4040
SanDiegoDA.com

OFFICE OF
THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

SUMMER STEPHAN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

DAVID P. GREENBERG
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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Contact: [Steve Walker](#) (619) 531-3890
[Tanya Sierra](#) (619) 531-3315
En Español [Barbara Medina](#) (619) 531-3305

22 Lawyers Sworn in as Deputy District Attorneys at San Diego DA's Office

2019 Class Includes Naval Officer, Athletes and Former Business Owners

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced the swearing in today of a new class of 22 Deputy District Attorneys, who took the oath at the Hall of Justice downtown. The members of the new class, who have diverse professional and personal backgrounds, bring an array of rich experience to the DA's Office.

"I am excited to welcome the class of 2019 to our office, consisting of professionals who reflect the diversity in our community and are committed to the principles of fair and equal justice for everyone," District Attorney Summer Stephan said. "I am confident they will do an outstanding job supporting our mission to prevent crime, protect victims and prosecute those who break the law."

The new class includes a naval officer, four collegiate athletes, prosecutors from different states, former business owners, a rodeo queen, a former Israeli women's national soccer team member, a founder of a gang-prevention program, many law review members, a founder of a non-profit organization that provided educational resources to students in City Heights, a former Teach For America teacher, and award-winning law students. As a group, they speak 11 different languages.

Diva Aziz said the road to becoming a prosecutor was paved in her desire to want to provide justice to society's most vulnerable people.

"I have seen violence, discrimination, and injustice – being born in Afghanistan and growing up in Russia," Aziz said. "These experiences definitely shaped my character, and have taught me about standing up for what's right, about integrity, commitment, being a team player, having compassion, and hard work. It has also helped me discover my purpose in life, which is being a prosecutor, serving, and giving back to my community."

Malak Behrouznami, who was born in El Paso, but raised in Juarez, Mexico, said she grew up looking for a way to serve her community. She was especially motivated by the hundreds of women who would go missing and eventually turn up murdered in Juarez.

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“That motivated me to want to do something,” Behrouzjami said. “I’ve always wanted to find a way to serve the community I care about and this job is the best means for me to do fulfill that need. This office has shown me that it’s not about the wins or the losses, it’s about the justice.”

Katherine Grabar, who was drawn to a career in prosecution, said she was inspired by San Diego’s collaborative courts programs and its Computer and Technology Crime High Tech (CATCH) Team. After hearing from seasoned prosecutors throughout the training process, she wants to focus on being an accomplished trial attorney.

“The people here not only want to help the community, but they also want to help each other,” Grabar said. “I am eager to give back to the community of San Diego and the DA’s Office.”

WATCH the newest Deputy District Attorneys being sworn in. Click [here](#).

The new prosecutors recently completed a three-week, intensive training to learn the functions of the office and practice essential trial advocacy skills, under the guidance of senior Deputy District Attorneys. Their training motto was “setting the standard of excellence.” The new prosecutors will report to their assignments today across all branches and divisions of the District Attorney’s Office.

The San Diego DA’s Office has more than 1,080 employees, including a diverse group of 330 Deputy District Attorneys of which 184 are women and 146 are men.

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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 justice and support victims daily across San Diego County. DA Summer Stephan has devoted her life to protecting children and families and providing justice to the voiceless and most vulnerable. She is a national leader in the fight against sexual exploitation and human trafficking, and has served as a Deputy District Attorney in San Diego County for 29 years.