



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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PROBATION DEPARTMENT CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Juvenile Justice Expert to Deliver Keynote Address; Probation Pioneers Awarded

On Monday, Mar. 5, the County's Probation Department will be honoring its past and opening the door to the future at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Theater. In 1907, the Probation Department began as a one-man operation, but 100 years later, the Department has flourished into a nationally recognized leader in rehabilitation and supervision.

Child Welfare League of America Executive Director Shay Bilchik will be the keynote speaker at the award's ceremony. In 1996, Bilchik helped District 4 Supervisor Ron Roberts, the Probation Department, the court system and community-based organizations develop a national model for juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation.

"Shay was instrumental in helping to make the juvenile justice system in San Diego County one of the best in the nation," said Roberts, the chairman of the Board of Supervisors. "Together with our community partners we have established a legacy that should last for the next 100 years."

During the afternoon session, Chief Probation Officer Vincent J. Iaria will present the Department's 100-year history to more than 750 current and retired Probation staff and community leaders. He will also present "Probation Pioneer" awards to retired Chief Probation Officer Cecil Steppe and retired Presiding Juvenile Court Judge James Milliken.

"Our department and profession have come a long way since there was only one probation officer in the County in 1907," says Iaria. "Probation officers may operate quietly in the background to most residents, but they are an integral part of keeping our communities safe, assisting victims and helping people become productive citizens."

Editor's Note: Shay Bilchik is scheduled to speak from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The Probation history and pioneer awards will begin at 1:00 p.m.

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