

## **Judge Honored for Work With Juvenile Court**

The Santa Clara County program brings prosecutors, defenders and probation officers together to handle cases.

**By Erik Cummins Daily Journal Staff Writer**

SAN JOSE - Silicon Valley will honor Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Eugene Hyman for his efforts in establishing the nation's first juvenile domestic and family violence court.

Hyman, who developed the innovative juvenile delinquency calendar last year, will receive the foundation's 7th annual LACY award. The award, which refers to the foundation's Legal Advocates for Children & Youth program, will be given during the program's annual luncheon at Hyatt Richeys in Palo Alto.

Hyman said the LACY award comes as a pleasant surprise.

"It's a great honor," added the 10-year veteran of the Santa Clara bench. "I view it as accepting kudos on behalf of so many people. [Designing the program] was a true collaboration that showed that people who are committed can sit down and work out their problems, and create something without any new funds."

The idea of a specific juvenile domestic and family violence calendar stems from successful models used in drug and domestic violence court, he said. Participants include district attorneys, public defenders, probation officers and mental health professionals, among others.

A major feature of the Wednesday afternoon calendar is a 26-week long education and intervention option for batterers. Hyman said it also features the intensive supervision of the judge, who can encourage and penalize youth offenders.

The foundation's executive director, Jim Bower, called Hyman a leader in creating the calendar.

"He's a very innovative and visionary person, and he has a deep commitment to the rehabilitation of youth," he said this week.

Also at today's luncheon, the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley will celebrate the work of Santa Clara's Family Court Services, which investigates and mediates child custody and visitation disputes. As employees of the Santa Clara Superior Court, the mediators and mental health professionals at Family Court Services also provide counseling, education and referrals to families in crisis.

In addition, Family Court Services Director Sandra Clark said, the agency is now supervising a three-year, five-county grant program that provides low-cost supervised visitation services to non-custodial parents. Recently, it also worked with LACY to develop an informational booklet for teen parents.

The annual LACY awards luncheon is a major fundraiser for the non-profit foundation, said Bower. This year's event, he said, has already surpassed the foundation's goal of grossing \$28,000. Bower said the luncheon will gross more than \$40,000 and net at least \$30,000.

Michael Kalkstein, a partner with Oppenheimer Wolff & Donnelly, said his firm became a major sponsor of the LACY program because it provides "very valuable, much-needed and otherwise unavailable services" to Silicon Valley children.

"It's pretty clear if [these children] couldn't get a free lawyer, they couldn't get any lawyer," said the intellectual property litigator. "They've got to have some kind of representation or they're really at a disadvantage."

Another pair of LACY supporters, Steven and Michele Kirsch, will present this year's LACY awards. Steven Kirsch is a founder of the Infoseek search engine, while Michele Kirsch is a third-year law student at the Santa Clara University School of Law. According to Bower, the Kirsches have expressed a "very sincere interest and support for legal services for children."

The Law Foundation of Silicon Valley was established more than 25 years ago as the Santa Clara County Bar Association Law Foundation. Today, it has a \$1.8 million annual budget and 18 full-time attorneys.

The ten-year-old LACY program is one of five legal services programs maintained by the foundation. The others are The Public Interest Law Firm, the Mental Health Advocacy Project, AIDS Legal Services and the Fair Housing Law Project. The LACY program provides clients with direct legal representation, as well as social work. Clients have issues ranging from abuse and neglect to guardianship, emancipation and adoption.