

Pre-Law Advisory Council Members

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Robert Tafoya

Robert Tafoya is one of eleven children. He attended high school in Ventura, California. He received an Associate of Arts degree from Ventura Community College in 1971. He then moved to Mexico and attended the University of the Americas in Puebla, Mexico where he studied Latin American history and economics. He returned to the United States in 1973 and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from California State University @ Sacramento and a Masters Degree in Education from the University of Southern California. He taught high school for two years as a participant in the Teachers Corp Program. He enrolled in Hastings College of the Law in 1975 and earned a juris doctorate in May 1978. He relocated to Kern County from San Francisco in the fall of 1978 and began practicing law exclusively in Kern County until October 2002 when he was appointed to the Kern County bench by Governor Grey Davis. At the time of his appointment he was a certified family law specialist and the president of the Kern County Bar Association. He has been a superior court judge for the past 13 years and presides over both criminal and civil matters.

Judge Tafoya is married to Sandra Serrano, Chancellor of the Kern Community College District. They have two children, Galen, age 39 years who is a graduate of Chapman University and works in media production in Los Angeles and New York. Their daughter, Christina, age 34 is a graduate of Cal State University @ Bakersfield where she earned a degree in kinesiology. She is currently in a nursing program at Bakersfield College.



Steven Katz

Judge Katz began his judicial career in December 2008 after being appointed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in October, 2008. While on the Kern County Superior Court he has handled a variety of both criminal and civil cases. For over two years he served as the Supervising Judge of the misdemeanor section of the court. Currently assigned to a general trial court, Judge Katz spent the prior two years as the pre-preliminary hearing judge with the responsibility of assisting the prosecution and defense in negotiating early resolution of felony cases. For twenty years Judge Katz served in the Kern County District Attorney's Office as a law clerk, a deputy district attorney, and as a supervising attorney. As an attorney Judge Katz spent the bulk of his career handling civil and criminal matters involving consumer and environmental violations, asset forfeiture, insurance fraud, and child abduction. He also served as liaison to the Kern County Grand Jury. In 2007 Judge Katz was President of the Kern County Bar Association. Judge Katz has served as a director on the Kern County Bar Association Charitable Foundation since 2008. From 1996 through 2001, Judge Katz taught law at California Pacific School of Law in Bakersfield.



Mark Pafford

Mark Pafford, a Bakersfield native, graduated from Pepperdine University in 1993. Mr. Pafford graduated from McGeorge School of Law in 1996 and received the Order of the Coif award. He joined the Kern County District Attorney's Office in 1998 after two years in civil practice. Mr. Pafford has worked in the Misdemeanor, Preliminary Hearing, Juvenile, Gang, White Collar, and Special Prosecution Units. In 2008, he was promoted to Supervisor, where he supervised the Complaint Desk and General Felony Unit. In 2011, he was promoted to the Chief Deputy District Attorney, where he oversees the criminal division of the District Attorney's Office.



Linda Sullenger

Originally from Moosejaw, Saskatchewan, Canada, Linda Sullenger has resided in Bakersfield for over 40 years. During this time, she has accrued extensive community experience and brings this skill set to the Kern County Bar Association. A proven leader, Linda has a reputation for networking among various non-profits, significant Board of Director knowledge and comprehensive fundraising expertise. Linda is an accomplished chef, a therapy dog handler and passionate about design and the arts.

Aleixia Torres-Stallings

Biography currently unavailable.

David Torres

Biography currently unavailable.



Brett Price

Brett Price has practiced law in Bakersfield since 1976. Before joining Kronick, Moskovitz, Tiedemann & Girard, Price was in solo practice where he emphasized property tax litigation, business, commercial, construction, oil and gas law and complex bankruptcy matters. Currently, a significant portion of his practice focuses on complex litigation involving the evaluation and taxation of high value energy resource and industrial/commercial properties. He also serves as an arbitrator and has served as a pro tem judge for the Kern County Courts. He is currently serving as Immediate Past President of the Kern County Bar Association.



H.A. Sala

H.A. Sala has been an attorney for over 30 years. He was accepted to U.C. Davis in 1974 where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science. Thereafter, Mr. Sala was admitted to U.C. Berkeley–Boalt Hall School of Law. Upon earning his Juris Doctor in 1981, he was selected as an unfair labor practices prosecutor with the Agricultural Labor Relations Board where he worked to protect the rights of farm workers to improve working conditions and organize labor unions. During his tenure at the ALRB, he was successful in winning an unprecedented injunction in a complex labor law case. In 1983, he was recruited as a Kern County Deputy Public Defender where he tried approximately 40 cases to verdict in his first two years before opening his private law office in 1986. Since 1986, he has handled numerous high profile cases including the successful defense of murder charges against Offord Rollins, featured in the book “Mean Justice” which was written by a Pulitzer prize winning author about the Kern County criminal justice system. Throughout his career he has tried over 100 criminal cases to verdict. In 2010 he served as President of the Kern County Bar Association. He is a life member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and the California Association for Criminal Justice. In 2011 he was awarded the prestigious Atticus Finch Award for outstanding dedication to criminal defense and in 2014 the Kern County Bar Association selected Mr.

Sala as the recipient of the Bench and Bar Award for exemplary service to the legal profession. He has been certified by the California State Bar as a specialist in criminal law since 1995 and has an AV Preeminent Rating by Martindale-Hubbell.

Monica Bermudez



Monica Bermudez is a criminal defense attorney with the Law Office of David A. Torres, where she has been practicing for the past four years. Monica was raised in Bakersfield. She graduated from Foothill High School and attended Bakersfield College. Monica is a dedicated member of the Kern County Bar Association and volunteers her time as the President of the Women Lawyers Section and Criminal Defense Section. She is also a member of the board of directors for the Kern County Bar Association Young Lawyers Section.

Rebecca Murillo

Biography currently unavailable.