



DISTRICT ATTORNEY
LARRY D. MORSE II

550 W. Main Street
Merced, CA 95340
Phone (209) 385-7381
Fax (209) 725-3669

Chief Deputy District Attorney
HAROLD L. NUTT

Chief Deputy District Attorney
ROBERT O. CARROLL

Director of Administrative Services
JEANNETTE M. PACHECO

INVESTIGATIONS
(209) 385-7383

Chief Investigator
WILLIAM K. OLSON

VICTIM WITNESS
(209) 385-7385

Victim Witness Program Director
LISA DeSANTIS

LOS BANOS DIVISION
445 I Street
Los Banos, CA 93635
Phone (209) 710-6070
Fax (209) 827-2029

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 25, 2018

For More Information Contact:
Amanda McCoy (209) 628-1646

**BOARD APPROVES DA'S REQUEST FOR \$5K FOR
STATEWIDE DIVERSITY PROJECT**

The Merced County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday approved a request from District Attorney Larry D. Morse II to contribute \$5,000 to help fund statewide outreach efforts for racial diversity within California district attorney offices. The California District Attorneys Association Diversity Project was created as a response to a 2016 Stanford Criminal Justice Center report that underscored the lack of racial diversity within district attorneys' office in the state, according to Morse.

"It is essential to the fair administration of justice that Californians of every ethnicity believe that the criminal justice system is truly representative of them and their life experiences. The Stanford study correctly attributed the comparatively low numbers of minority candidates for prosecutor jobs as a major impediment to attaining racially represented offices, and that must change," Morse said. "Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey, who is African American, has been a leader in CDAA's efforts to do more to inspire members of minority communities to choose careers as prosecutors," he said.

Morse, who along with Lacey serves as a member of CDAA's Board of Directors, said the Diversity Project will begin its outreach efforts in elementary and high schools and work with various educational systems to bring about meaningful and focused opportunities in colleges and law schools. Project objectives include a campaign to promote the benefits of a prosecution career while addressing cultural concerns that often discourage members of minority communities from considering work as prosecutors.

"The public's faith in our justice system is its cornerstone and gives legitimacy to the verdicts and sentences that are handed down each day. California is an incredibly diverse state and our courtrooms and our district attorney offices must reflect that diversity in order to retain the public trust," he said. "My colleagues around the state are committed to ensuring that we are doing everything possible to make our offices as representative of the communities we serve as possible."

The contribution will be made from the District Attorney's state asset forfeiture funds with no cost to the county's general fund, Morse noted.