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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – MAY 9, 2012

Juror Appreciation Week 2012

'Focus on the Courtroom'

Celebrating jurors and raising awareness of new guidelines on use of social media during jury service

San Jose, Calif.—The Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara celebrates the 15th anniversary of Juror Appreciation Week, May 14 to18. The California Legislature designates the week each year to honor the important contributions of citizens who devote their time and effort in "making the cherished right of trial by jury a reality."

Advances in technology have presented both benefits and challenges in the courtroom and for jurors. In recognizing the meaningful role of jurors and providing access to fair and impartial justice, courts statewide are instructing jurors to turn off social media, as required under the Code of Civil Procedure and Penal Code sections amended by Assembly Bill 141.

"With the growing use of social media, we are directing jurors not to 'tag,' 'friend,' and 'tweet' about anything that takes place in the courtroom, said Presiding Judge Richard J. Loftus, Jr. "We want jurors to be aware that researching and disseminating trial-related information, which applies to all forms of electronic and wireless communication, is prohibited. As we move forward with the many accomplishments in our jury system, we need to *focus on the courtroom* so that jurors and litigants will continue to benefit from impartial and fair trials."

Focus on the Courtroom posters reminding jurors to switch off social media will soon be displayed at courthouses across the state.

In addition to the rise of social media, there have been numerous other changes to jury service in California over the last 15 years. Two notable improvements are the one-day or one-trial system that makes jury service more manageable, and plain-language jury instructions that makes jury service more understandable.

(more)

In fiscal year 2009–2010, millions of Californians participated in jury service:

- Approximately 10 million people were summoned to jury service;
- More than 3 million prospective jurors were eligible and available to serve; and
- About 200,000 jurors were sworn in as trial jurors.

The number of jurors who completed their service in one day increased from 66 percent in 2001 to 83 percent in 2010. The one-day or one-trial policy was enacted in 1999 by the Judicial Council in Rule 2.1002 of the California Rules of Court. This policy was in effect statewide by May 2002.

"Our judges and court staff would like to thank all our jurors for their valuable time and service in our courtrooms," said CEO David H. Yamasaki. "We hope that everyone in our community cherishes the rights of those in a jury trial as they do the rights we all enjoy every day outside the courthouse."

For more information, see **scscourt.org,** and please *Focus on the Courtroom*

Events in our community:

- Presiding Judge, Judges of the Superior Court, Jury Commissioner or Jury Staff--- will present certificates to jurors and giveaways like bookmarks, etc.

- Coffee and light refreshments will be served for all jurors reporting to jury service for the week of May 14, 2012.

For more resources, see also the California Courts website, *www.courts.ca.gov/juryservice.htm*]

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