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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office Awarded Special DUI Prosecution Grant**

Those arrested for DUI in Stanislaus County, especially repeat offenders and those involved in fatal or injury crashes, can expect to face highly trained, specialized prosecutors, thanks to a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety. The \$346,802 grant to the Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office will fund a Vertical Prosecution team that will work cases from arrest through sentencing.

"Drug and alcohol impaired driving presents a serious threat to public safety. We are grateful for this additional funding which allows us to dedicate highly trained prosecutors to this caseload," said District Attorney Birgit Fladager.

Funding from this DUI Prosecution Grant will aid the District Attorney's Office in handling cases throughout each step of the criminal process, prosecuting both alcohol and drug-impaired driving cases. In fatal and major injury DUI vehicle collisions, members of the team may respond to the crash scene to be part of the investigation.

Prosecution team members will work with the State's Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor Program to expand knowledge and resources in the office by obtaining and delivering specialized training, including training in the emerging problem of drug-impaired driving. Team members will share information with peers and law enforcement personnel throughout the county and across the state.

The purpose of the program is to prevent impaired driving and reduce alcohol and drug-impaired traffic fatalities and injuries. In 2013 there were 20 deaths and 343 serious injuries as a result of DUI crashes in the County.

“Overall, California’s roadways are among the safest in the nation,” said OTS Director Rhonda Craft. “But to meet future mobility, safety, and accessible transportation objectives, we have to work very hard together to reach our common goal – zero deaths on our roadways. The Office of Traffic Safety and the Stanislaus County District Attorney’s Office want to work with everyone to create a culture of traffic safety across Modesto and the state.”

Funding for the program comes from a grant by the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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