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## Press Release

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### **Real DUI Trial at Vacaville High School Will Give Students a Sobering Look at the Consequences of Drinking and Driving**

Vacaville, California – On March 20, 2008, Solano County Superior Court Commissioner Raymond C. Wieser, Jr., will hold a Driving Under the Influence (DUI) trial before approximately 250 students at Vacaville High School, 100 Monte Vista Avenue, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

This is not a mock court, but rather an actual criminal trial. Conducting a real DUI trial in a high school setting is an innovative strategy to help reduce community alcohol problems, including motor vehicle crashes. Students will witness the legal consequences of drinking and driving, and learn about the defendant's arrest, jailing, public trial and, if convicted, the imposed fines and penalties. They will also have an opportunity to learn more about the judicial branch of government.

Following the trial, Commissioner Wieser will make a brief presentation and co-facilitate an interactive civics lesson. The intent is to allow for significant dialogue among the students, defendant, judge, attorneys, witnesses, law enforcement officers, teachers, and special guests.

"I am pleased that the Solano County Superior Court and our criminal justice partners are able to offer this trial experience to the high school students of Solano County," said Presiding Judge Ramona J. Garrett. "I commend Commissioner Wieser for his leadership in establishing this program. The program will enhance the safety of the Solano County roadways."

Commissioner Wieser stated, "It is important to bring the harsh reality of driving under the influence cases to young drivers and make them aware of the consequences of this type of crime."

Drinking and driving continues to be the leading cause of collisions resulting in injury or death. Statistics show that 3 out of 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related motor vehicle crash at some point in their lives. Furthermore, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15-19 year olds - with the primary collision factor being alcohol.

Judges struggle in their courtrooms daily with individual and community problems created by DUI offenders. Many judges are looking for innovative ways to help reduce alcohol-related problems. This prevention program is designed to help students make more informed choices for resisting enticement from the alcohol industry, the media and social pressures to drink.

Vacaville High School is the first of four high schools in Solano County scheduled to host an actual DUI trial during this school year. The DUI Court in the Schools program is a cooperative effort involving the Superior Court, District Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Sheriff's Office, County Probation Department, and participating school districts in Solano County. The Program is funded through a grant from the Administrative Office of the Courts.