



**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
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November 29, 2018

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**MEDIA ADVISORY
KERN COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
AWARDED SPECIAL DUI PROSECUTION GRANT**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Approved by _____

Those arrested for DUI in Kern County, especially repeat offenders and those involved in fatal or injury crashes, can expect to face highly trained, specialized prosecutors, funded by a \$220,259 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). The grant to the Kern County District Attorney's Office will fund a Vertical Prosecution team that will work cases from arrest through conviction and sentencing.

District Attorney Lisa S. Green stated "This grant continues the highly successful partnership with OTS which provides us with the capability of handling highly complex DUI homicides and dangerous repeat offenders. Since 2010, when we first partnered with OTS, our special unit has prosecuted over 1000 cases. They have been recognized by MADD for their prosecutorial skills and have been a resource for prosecutors throughout the state, teaching for organizations like the California District Attorneys Association."

In 2015 there were 45 deaths and 601 serious injuries (according to available statistics from the CHP) as a result of DUI crashes in Kern County. Funding from this DUI Prosecution Grant will aid the Kern County District Attorney's Office in handling cases through each step of the criminal process from crash scene to sentencing, prosecuting both alcohol and drug-impaired driving cases.

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

"Vertical prosecution teams working serious DUI cases get the positive results needed," said OTS Director Rhonda Craft. "The Kern County District Attorney's Office, with assistance from the Office of Traffic Safety, will be working to help keep the streets across Kern County safe for everyone."

While alcohol remains the worst offender in DUI crashes, the Kern County District Attorney's Office supports the new effort from OTS that aims to drive awareness that "DUI Doesn't Just Mean Booze." Prescription medications and marijuana can also impair by themselves, or in combination with alcohol, and can result in a DUI arrest. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.