

NEWS RELEASE

Arizona Court of Appeals, Division 2

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March 9, 2016

Arizona Court of Appeals Visiting Santa Cruz County for Student Events at Two High Schools

TUCSON – Division Two of the Arizona Court of Appeals, in conjunction with the Superior Court in Santa Cruz County, will be holding a new type of student interaction event at two different schools. Judges will visit Nogales High School and Rio Rico High School on Tuesday, March 15. Students will have face-to-face classroom contact with judges from the Arizona Court of Appeals as well as judges from the Superior Court in Santa Cruz County.

“This is a new, two-part format that we’re launching. First, in what we’re calling *Pathways to the Bench*, we will briefly discuss our diverse backgrounds and how we came to be on the Court,” Division Two Court of Appeals Chief Judge Peter Eckerstrom explained. “Then we’re going to begin *Fundamentals of the Courts and Law*, which will involve interactive dialogue about how the courts work in Arizona, how the decision-making process works, the kinds of cases we tackle, the role of the judiciary and so forth.”

On Tuesday, March 15, the Court of Appeals and Superior Court Judges will split into two groups with judges from both courts visiting Nogales High School from 9:30 to 10:25. The other group will visit Rio Rico High School from 10:00 to 11:00.

“These students are very interested and concerned with charting their futures. Very few of us ultimately find ourselves where we had planned to be when we were in high school, but by describing the paths that ultimately led them to their positions the judges will be encouraging the students to prepare themselves for whatever opportunities may come their way,” said Judge Thomas Fink, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court in Santa Cruz County.

After the classroom visits, the judges will convene at the Superior Court building in Nogales for a meeting and luncheon with Superior Court judges and staff. During lunch, judges from the trial courts and appeals court will discuss challenges and opportunities related to recent rule changes, jurisdictional issues, juvenile courts, and other matters.

Both efforts are aimed at improving court and community participation, one of the goals outlined in the Arizona Supreme Court’s Strategic Agenda called *Advancing Justice Together: Courts & Communities*. This document outlines strategic initiatives for all of the courts in Arizona.

“We hope that this new format is a successful event that we can replicate in all of the counties served by Division Two of the Court of Appeals,” Chief Judge Eckerstrom said.

Division Two hears appeals from courts in Cochise, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, Pinal, and Santa Cruz Counties. Six judges serve on Division Two of the Arizona Court of Appeals. There are also five staff attorneys, a Clerk of the Court of Appeals office and support personnel who help schedule or prepare cases for court.

For more information about the court system in Arizona, please go to www.azcourts.gov.

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News reporters who have questions about this event should contact Heather Murphy, Communications Director for the Arizona Courts at 602-452-3656 or hmurphy@courts.az.gov.