



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 28, 2020

Presiding Judge Deborah A. Ryan Honored by the Santa Clara County Bar Association Women Lawyers' Section

In a moving ceremony that celebrated and honored two exceptional female jurists, Presiding Judge Deborah A. Ryan received the Mary Jo Levinger Reception Honoree Award, named in honor of Judge Levinger, who passed in 2019. Held via Zoom on Thursday, August 27, 2020, the event was well attended by judges, attorneys, and court staff who came to recognize and appreciate Judge Deborah A. Ryan and honor the memory and legacy of Hon. Mary Jo Levinger.

The event began with colleagues of Hon. Mary Jo Levinger describing the vast impact that she had upon the legal community in Santa Clara County. Testimonials detailed how Judge Levinger consistently supported and promoted other women attorneys throughout her career and did so with an unforgettably brilliant smile. Even back during her time in Santa Clara Law (which, at the time, graduated only ten women in her class), she helped break new ground and smash glass ceilings. It is because of exceptional women like Hon. Mary Jo Levinger that last year, the Santa Clara County Superior Court achieved [gender parity on its Bench](#) for the first time.

In speaking of the Santa Clara Bench leadership and exceptional women jurists, it is fitting to include the honoree of the event, Hon. Deborah A. Ryan. Judge Deborah A. Ryan has presided over the Santa Clara County Superior Court during a most tumultuous time in our Court's history and has done so with a steadfast, thoughtful, and collaborative leadership style that has helped us navigate through all of the challenges of 2020. She utilizes her wealth of legal experience, from her 21 years on the Bench and her prior years as an attorney, and her sound judgment and compassion, to communicate both intellectually and emotionally to attorneys and parties in the courtroom. She is a voice of leadership in our legal community during this trying and uncertain time.

Assistant Presiding Judge Ted Zayner summed up the mutually felt sentiments best, "Presiding Judge Deborah A. Ryan is recognized and respected as a leader on our Bench, throughout our local legal community, among our County partners, and statewide throughout the Judicial Branch." Judge Zayner continued, "Judge Ryan has been the right leader for our court and legal community at this time. She has been a leader, mentor, and role model for women in law and on the Bench throughout her career. Those who are fortunate to work with her and call her their friend are better for having known her."

The Court thanks Presiding Judge Deborah A. Ryan and congratulates her on receiving this well-deserved award.



The 2020 Mary Jo Levinger Reception Honoree

HON. DEBORAH A. RYAN



Presiding Judge of the Superior
Court of California, County of Santa Clara

With 21 years of judicial experience, the Honorable Deborah A. Ryan serves as the Presiding Judge of the Court with the Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara. She brings to the bench 22 years of governmental experience working in the Santa Clara County Public Defender's Office, the Santa Clara County Counsel's Office, and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. Judge Ryan utilizes her wealth of legal experience, along with her sound judgment and compassion, to not only communicate both intellectually and emotionally to attorneys and parties in the courtroom, but is a voice of leadership in our legal community during this trying and uncertain time.