



## The Young Women's Power Lunch 2022 "Be The Upstanders"

The Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara welcomed nearly 80 attendees to this year's Young Women's Power Lunch, including high school students, school liaisons, and mentors comprised of female judicial officers, attorneys, elected officials, and local leaders. The Power Lunch aims to connect high school students with adult mentors to recognize and discuss barriers that the women have faced, young or older, and provide insight and suggestions on overcoming those challenges in an atmosphere of unity and support.

Retired Judge LaDoris Cordell, the first African American woman judge in Northern California, former Independent Policy Auditor, and author of "Her Honor: My Life on the Bench...What Works, What's Broken, and How to Change It," inspired the youth to be upstanders. "What the world needs now, more than ever, are smart, compassionate, female leaders... So I am putting my faith in each one of you young women to be our next leaders," she told the young women. "The upstander stands up, speaks up, sings up, lawyers up for justice. Upstanders are ordinary people like you and me who speak up even when we are afraid and even when it is far easier to simply remain silent.... Be the upstanders!" All young women participating in the event received a personalized signed copy of "Her Honor" from Judge Cordell.

The young women then met in a small group with the adult mentors, intimately sharing their personal stories and struggles with the mentors to provide support, insight, and encouragement on moving forward in their journey. The event was closed out by a soothing meditative exercise by Alternate Defender and mindfulness coach Lori Stuart.

Judge Julia Alloggiamento, Chair of the Court Community Outreach Committee, described the event atmosphere: "There was laughter and tears and hugs and connections. The energy was palpable. In these challenging times, it was incredibly heartwarming to be part of the vulnerability and compassion that created unity among all the women at the event. We hope these young women are inspired to be an upstander our future leaders and, most importantly, to find support from and give support to other women along their journey."

"Despite the challenges facing our community, leaders from throughout Santa Clara County continue to step up to support the well-being of youth and create space for young people to be empowered. By actively encouraging youth to use their voice, build strong networks, practice mindfulness, and acknowledge the multitude of layers facing them, the Power Lunch platform invests in our future," said Britney Huelbig, Deputy Manager for the Santa Clara County Superior Court.

