

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

JOYCE E. DUDLEY
District Attorney



DA 04-402

RELEASE NUMBER

April 14, 2017

RELEASE DATE

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

April 14, 2017

**Re: Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office Holds Media Event
April 19th, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. Commemorating National Crime Victims' Rights Week**

District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today that the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office will commemorate our nation's progress in advancing victims' rights by honoring outstanding citizens: Homicide Survivor, Maria Navarro and Santa Maria Police Department Detectives Jose DeLeija, Michael Huffman and Cassandra Stowasser. The Press Conference will be held at the Santa Maria Unified School District Office located at 702 South Miller Street, Santa Maria.

The Citizen of Courage Award will be presented to Homicide Survivor **Maria Navarro, Mother of Anthony Ibarra**. Maria lived through the horror of losing a son to torture and murder perpetrated by multiple defendants. Through her journey, Maria has evolved and embodied the concept of moving from victim to survivor exuding hope and healing even after enduring an unthinkable crime.

Santa Maria Police Department Detectives Jose DeLeija, Michael Huffman and Cassandra Stowasser are being honored with the Victim Service Award for their unwavering commitment, compassion and dedication to victims of crime, particularly the most vulnerable, children.

This has become a yearly event sponsored by the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office. On only two prior occasions has the District Attorney's Office offered a third surprise award to someone in the media who showed particular sensitivity to a crime victim(s). This year there will be a third surprise recipient.

District Attorney Joyce Dudley states, "We stand together with the individuals being honored on Wednesday April 19th, committed to protecting and upholding Victims' Rights as well as the public's safety. Our office is dedicated to the pursuit of truth and justice by employing the highest ethical standards in vigorously prosecuting the guilty as well as protecting the innocent; this we do by seeking to insure that all crime victims are treated with fairness, dignity and respect."

Award recipients will be present at the press conference and available for questions.

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