

Words to Deeds recognizes leaders in public safety, mental health, and housing who champion efforts to end the criminalization of individuals with mental illness. Honorees are recognized for their efforts to support proven strategies that promote early intervention, access to effective and responsive treatments, a planned reentry, and/or the preservation of public safety. The Leadership Group nominates and votes for all honorees.

2026 County Champion: Ky Le – Deputy County Executive, on behalf of Santa Clara County

State Champion: Michelle Doty Cabrera – Executive Director, County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California

Lifetime Achievement: Tomiquia Moss – Secretary, California Housing and Homelessness Agency

2025 County Champion: Sarah Eberhardt-Rios – Director, Sutter County Health and Human Services

State Champion: Jim Mayer – Adjunct Professor, McGeorge School of Law

Lifetime Champion: David Panush – President, California Health Policy Strategies

2024 Community Champion: Rayshell Chambers – Executive Director, Painted Brain; Commissioner, Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission

County Champion: Luke Bergmann – Director of Behavioral Health Services, County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency

Law Enforcement Champion: Cherylynn Lee – Police Psychologist/Behavioral Science Unit Manager, Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office

State Champion: Toby Ewing – Executive Director, Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission

2022 Law Enforcement Champion: Lisa Heintz – Director of Legislation and Special Projects for the Federal Court Receiver, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

State Champion: Stephanie Welch – Deputy Secretary of Behavioral Health, California Health and Human Services Agency

Community Champion: Sandri Kramer – Director of Community Relations and Special Projects, Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services

2019 Law Enforcement Champion: Wendy Still – Chief Probation Officer, Alameda County

State Champion: Mark Grabau, PhD – Chief Psychologist, Forensic Services Division, California Department of State Hospitals

Judicial Champion: Honorable Eileen Moore – Associate Justice, California Court of Appeal

2018 Law Enforcement Champion: Charles Dempsey – Detective III, Officer-In-Charge of the Administrative Training Detail, Mental Evaluation Unit, Los Angeles Police Department

Judicial Champion: Honorable James Bianco – Site Judge, Los Angeles Superior Court Mental Health Court

Behavioral Health Champion: Kita Curry, PhD – Chief Executive Officer, Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services

2017 Law Enforcement Champion: Terri McDonald – Chief Probation Officer, Los Angeles County

State Champion: Tina Wooton – Manager, Santa Barbara County Department of Behavioral Wellness; Chair, California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission

Lifetime Achievement: Charles Walters, PhD – Law Enforcement Consultant, Past Member-Council on Mentally Ill Offenders, Retired Assistant Sheriff, Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Department

2016 Law Enforcement Champion: George Gascon – District Attorney, San Francisco County

State Champion: Bill Brown – Sheriff-Coroner, Santa Barbara County

County Champion: Jackie Lacey – District Attorney, Los Angeles County

2015 Law Enforcement Champion: Senator Jim Beall – California State Senator

Judicial Champion: Judge Richard J. Loftus, Jr. – Santa Clara County Superior Court

County Champion: Jo Robinson, MFT – Director, San Francisco Department of Public Health, Behavioral Health Services

Behavioral Health Champion: Linda Boyd, RN, BSM, MN – Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Emergency Outreach Bureau

2014 Law Enforcement Champion: Norm Hurst – Deputy Chief, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department (Retired)

County Champion: Susan Adams – Marin County Supervisor

Behavioral Health Champion: Mark Refowitz – Director, Orange County Health Care Agency

Criminal Justice Champion: Lisa Rodriguez – San Diego County Assistant District Attorney

2013 Community Champion: Mark Gale – California Treatment Advocacy Coalition, Los Angeles

County Champion: Scott MacDonald – Santa Cruz County Probation Chief

Law Enforcement Champion: Curtis J. Hill – San Benito County Sheriff (Retired)

Lifetime Achievement: David Meyer, Esq. – Research Scholar, Institute of Psychiatry, Law and Behavioral Sciences, USC Keck School of Medicine

2013 Inaugural Paradigm Awards Event

Law Enforcement Champion: Tona Wakefield – Bringing Our Community Home, Santa Barbara

Judicial Champion: Judge Stephen V. Manley – Santa Clara County Superior Court

Law Enforcement Champion: Lee Baca – Los Angeles County Sheriff

County Champion: Jennifer Johnson – San Francisco County Deputy Public Defender

State Champion: Senator Darrell Steinberg – California State Senate President pro Tempore

Lifetime Achievement: Helen M. Thomson – Yolo County Board of Supervisors and Assembly District 8 Representative (Retired)