



San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott

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MADD Honors Deputy City Attorney Who Prosecutes “Drugged Driving”

Michael E. Cosgrove, Jr. Named “Outstanding Prosecutor of the Year”

The local chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving has named as its Outstanding Prosecutor of the Year for 2016 Deputy City Attorney Michael E. Cosgrove, Jr., whose specialty is Drug DUIs – cases in which motorists are impaired by drugs (prescription and illegal) or by drugs combined with alcohol.

Cosgrove’s commendation from MADD, America’s leading drunk-driving foe, is recognition of the growing phenomenon of Drug DUIs and the threat they pose to public safety.

Since joining the San Diego City Attorney’s Office in January 2015, Cosgrove has had 23 jury trials. In 2016, he prosecuted ten DUI trials. Of these, five involved defendants charged with being under the influence of alcohol. The other five involved drivers who were under the influence of a drug, such as marijuana, methamphetamine, Xanax, or Lorazepam.

The San Diego City Attorney’s Office has managed a Vertical Drug DUI Prosecution Unit since November 2014. Funding for the program comes from a \$287,610 grant by the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Under the 2015-2016 OTS grant, this Office prosecuted 282 drug and drug/alcohol-impaired cases (up from 150 cases the previous year), the majority of them purely drug DUI cases, with a 98 percent conviction rate. The Office as a whole prosecuted over 2,700 DUI cases during this period.

Cosgrove was assigned to the grant-funded team that specializes in prosecuting drugged driving cases in June 2016 because of his success in trying impaired driving cases. Cosgrove skillfully reviewed, issued, and prosecuted driving under the influence of drugs, or drugs in combination with alcohol cases.

Cosgrove’s success as a drug DUI prosecutor has helped debunk the myth that cases involving driving under the influence of marijuana or prescription drugs are too difficult to prove. In fact, Cosgrove has obtained guilty pleas or verdicts in the overwhelming majority of these cases.

“MADD could not have picked a better Prosecutor of the Year,” City Attorney Mara Elliott said. **“Mike Cosgrove’s expertise is keeping dangerous drivers off of our streets and highways, and the techniques he and his unit deploy are being shared with their colleagues, who prosecute thousands of DUI cases every year. Crimes once considered difficult to prove now result in guilty pleas and stiff sentences in the City of San Diego.”**

Prior to attending the California Western School of Law and joining the City Attorney's Office, Cosgrove served for 24 years in the United States Navy operating nuclear power plants on submarines, retiring as a Master Chief Petty Officer. His science and engineering background has proven to be highly useful in his DUI prosecutions.

Cosgrove will be honored at MADD's 2017 Law Enforcement & Prosecutor Recognition Luncheon on Friday, June 2, 2017, at the Business EXPO Center, 1960 S. Anaheim Way, Anaheim, California. There will be a reception at 10:00 a.m. and the ceremony begins at 11:30 a.m.

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EDITORS: A photo of Michael Cosgrove is attached for your use.
Credit: Michael Cosgrove