

NEWS RELEASE

R. Andrew Murray
District Attorney

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Renowned experts to provide implicit bias training at DA's Office

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – District Attorney Andrew Murray is pleased to announce that Mecklenburg County prosecutors are receiving training this year regarding racial bias and racial disparity. The District Attorney's Office is also proud to host a mandatory training for all Assistant District Attorneys this fall to learn about implicit bias. These trainings are part of DA Murray's ongoing commitment to ensure that his office continues to handle the prosecution of cases in a fair manner without regard to race, socioeconomic status or any other factor beyond the pursuit of justice.

"Prosecutors have the dual responsibility of keeping the community safe while also protecting individuals' rights," says DA Murray. "Inequality should have no place in the criminal justice system, and it is critical that my office proactively confronts these issues to maintain the public's trust in our work."

As a collaborative partner of the local Race Matters for Juvenile Justice initiative, DA Murray has directed his entire management team to attend a workshop series designed to help participants understand how racial inequities affect the community. During the "Dismantling Racism" sessions held throughout the year, prosecutors, law enforcement and other Mecklenburg County judicial officials examine disparities within our society and in the criminal justice system.

This fall, all Mecklenburg County Assistant District Attorneys will explore the effects of implicit bias in a training session organized by the DA's Office. During the presentation, prosecutors will learn about the history of racial disparity in the court system and how that history can be instructive today. They'll also be introduced to intervention methods that lawyers and law enforcement can use to reduce personal biases and minimize any effects of those biases in their work.

The implicit bias training will be led by law professors John A. Powell and Rachel Godsil, who are experts in the field.

John A. Powell is an internationally recognized expert in the areas of civil rights and civil liberties and a wide range of issues including race, structural racism, ethnicity, housing, poverty and democracy. In addition to being a Professor of Law and Professor of African American Studies and Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, Professor Powell is the director of the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society and holds the Robert D. Haas Chancellor's Chair in Equity and Inclusion.

Professor Godsil is a professor at Seton Hall University School of Law. She is also a cofounder and director of research for the Perception Institute. She regularly provides trainings and lectures to a wide range of private and public institutions seeking to address the role of bias, and she has provided trainings on implicit bias to state judges across the country on behalf of the National Association of State Judges. Professor Godsil's prior experience includes service as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York and as an Associate Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at www.facebook.com/charmeckda and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.

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