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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sept. 21, 2017

**NELSON LAUNCHES JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Furthering her commitment to improving public safety and juvenile justice, State Attorney Melissa Nelson today announced the creation of a community-led effort tasked with the development of programming for juveniles that aims to reduce recidivism rates and crime.

Nelson has launched the office's Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, made up of a group of stakeholders who share a passion for juvenile justice and a desire to improve our community.

Over the next year, the JJAC will be charged with reviewing the State Attorney's Office current juvenile diversion programs to determine how existing opportunities can be altered and enhanced. It also will look at how other jurisdictions across the country are addressing juvenile justice issues, with the prospect of bringing best practices to the Fourth Circuit.

"I am thankful that such a dedicated group of community leaders has stepped up to take on this smart justice initiative," said Nelson. "With their assistance, we will be able to find solutions to benefit this community and make it safer."

The effort will be led by Buddy Schulz, the Holland & Knight law partner who has long been involved with juvenile justice issues.

"There is no element or issue more important to the health of our community than how the criminal justice system interacts with our youth," said Schulz. "I am grateful to be among so many who want to focus on such a critical issue."

The first meeting is scheduled 9-11 a.m. Sept. 29 at Holland & Knight, 50 N. Laura St. Meetings will be open to the public and operate according to Florida's open government "Sunshine" Law.

Assistant State Attorneys, staff, and interns with the office will be providing support to the committee over the next year.

A dedicated page on the Fourth Circuit State Attorney's website is located at <http://bit.ly/2xyFqiu>.

**The members of the committee are:**

- **Buddy Schulz (chair)**, Partner, Holland & Knight
- **The Honorable Suzanne Bass**, Circuit Judge (Division JV-A), Fourth Judicial Circuit
- **Vicki Burke**, Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative Coordinator, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice
- **Jim Clark**, CEO, Daniel Memorial Inc.
- **The Honorable Brian Davis**, District Judge, U.S. Middle District of Florida
- **Pamela Davis**, Executive Director of Dropout Prevention, Duval County Public Schools
- **Rory Diamond**, CEO, K9s For Warriors
- **Kevin Gay**, CEO/Founder, Operation New Hope
- **Nat Glover**, President, Edward Waters College and former Jacksonville Sheriff
- **Dr. Jeff Goldhagen**, Professor and Chief of Community Pediatrics, UF College of Medicine — Jacksonville
- **Shelley Grant**, Professor of Sociology, Jacksonville University
- **Marcus Haile**, Chief Development Officer, Cathedral Arts Project
- **Gretchen Hamm**, Comprehensive Service Center Operations Manager, Mental Health Resource Center
- **Elder Lee Harris**, Pastor, Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church
- **Bill Hodges**, Government Affairs and Strategic Initiatives Director, Jacksonville Children’s Commission
- **Alan Louder**, Director of Juvenile Diversion, Fourth Judicial Circuit State Attorney’s Office
- **Michael Meyers**, Retired Partner, Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP
- **Lara Nezami**, Partner, Finnell, McGuinness, Nezami & Andux PA
- **Deloris Patterson**, Assistant Chief and Zone 5 Commander, Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office
- **The Honorable Jack Schemer**, Circuit Judge (FM-A), Fourth Judicial Circuit
- **Anthony Stinson**, Community Activist and Small Business Owner
- **Nina Waters**, President, The Community Foundation of Northeast Florida
- **Vicki Waytowich**, Project Director, System of Care, Jacksonville Children’s Commission