



2019

ANNUAL REPORT

STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
MELISSA W. NELSON

FLORIDA'S FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
PUBLIC ENTRANCE

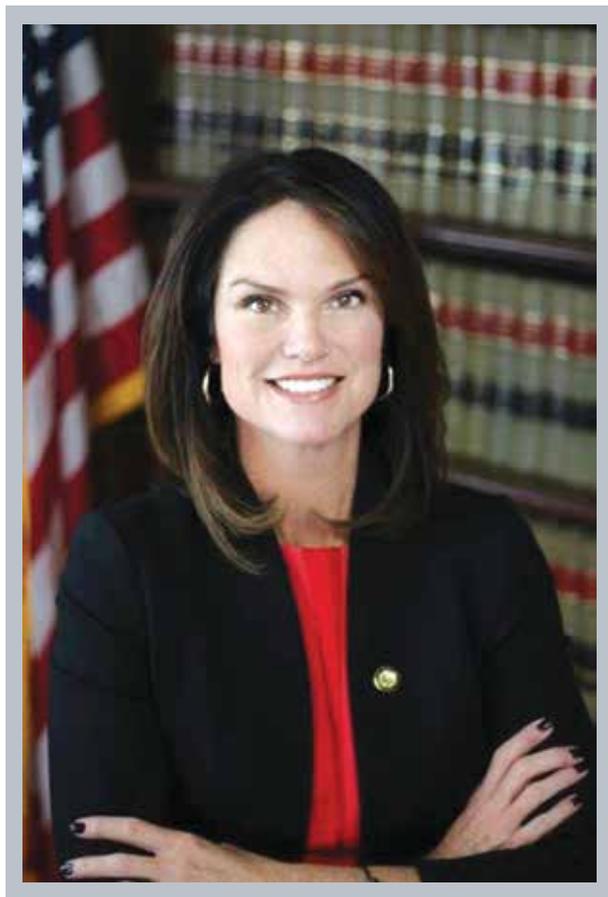
311 WEST MONROE

The mission of the State Attorney's Office is to pursue justice for the citizens of the Fourth Circuit of Florida and fairly and impartially enforce the law.

WE WILL :

- Treat all served by the criminal justice system with **respect**;
- Empower crime victims and treat them with **dignity**;
- Strive for **fairness** and **impartiality** in our use of prosecutorial discretion;
- Pursue just punishment and **accountability** for those guilty of crimes;
- **Actively seek input** from the diverse communities we serve;
- Lead with **transparency** in our actions and decision-making;
- Seek **effective** and **innovative** strategies for preventing and controlling crime;
- **Support and explore alternatives to the penal system** when appropriate;
- Act as **good stewards** of public resources entrusted to us for our work;
- Stay abreast of **best practices** in our field and employ technology effectively;
- **Collaborate** with other government and law enforcement agencies and community partners to enhance public safety;
- Act with **professionalism**.

Pursue Justice Always



At the heart of a prosecutor is an innate desire to serve. To protect all citizens who are the friends, families, and neighbors that make up this place we call home. And in this endeavor, to always pursue justice.

Since returning to this office more than three years ago, I have seen firsthand how the men and women of the State Attorney's Office – more than 300 attorneys, investigators, and support staff – demonstrate that pursuit of justice every day.

I wrote these words in what seemed to be ordinary times – before COVID-19 disrupted life as we knew. And before the tragic killing of George Floyd. These two events together have made for a time in our country, perhaps, unlike any other, that is far from ordinary. Returning to this letter in preparation for the release of this report affirmed my belief in the importance of service, integrity, respect, and equal justice. These were then, and still are, the guiding principles I have for the Office of the State Attorney.

Now, more than ever before, it is incumbent on us to continue to build bridges in our communities and foster the public's trust in our work.

Because our success is linked to our relationships, we continued to grow them by participating in town halls, citizen forums, education fairs, senior events, and business and civic meetings. The relationships we have cultivated with our valued research partners are also vital as we collectively seek to improve trust, transparency, and safety.

In the courtroom, we achieved justice for victims of crimes in thousands of cases. Consistent with our mission to Pursue Justice Always, our Conviction Integrity Review Unit led the way in overturning convictions for two men who spent nearly 43 years in prison, resulting in their release.

The collaborative work of law enforcement and prosecutors working within the newly opened Crime Gun Intelligence Center is harnessing the power of technology and real time crime evidence to disrupt shooters and take crime guns off our streets. This innovation hub will have a lasting impact in the fight to reduce violent crime in Northeast Florida.

Last year, we created and published a Strategic Plan – our first-ever for this State Attorney's Office, developed by employees of the agency to clearly establish and communicate to the public our priorities over the next three years.

This Annual Report highlights our work in 2019. Throughout its pages, you too will see the same desire, talent, and commitment that I am privileged to witness and support every day.

Thank you for your interest in our work. It is an honor to serve as your State Attorney.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa".



THE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE OPENS

In 2017, State Attorney Nelson committed to opening the bridge that connects the SAO to the courthouse. Last year, this promise was finally realized and access - previously limited to just a few - was expanded to staff, victims, their families, and witnesses.

With the support of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, City of Jacksonville, and Duval County judiciary, the bridge is now open.



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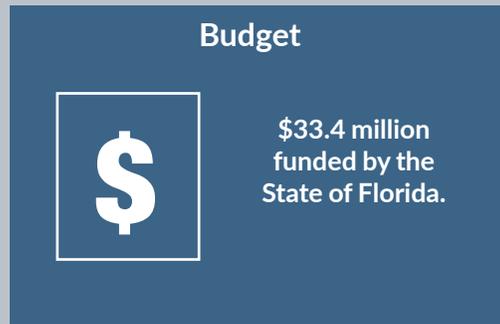
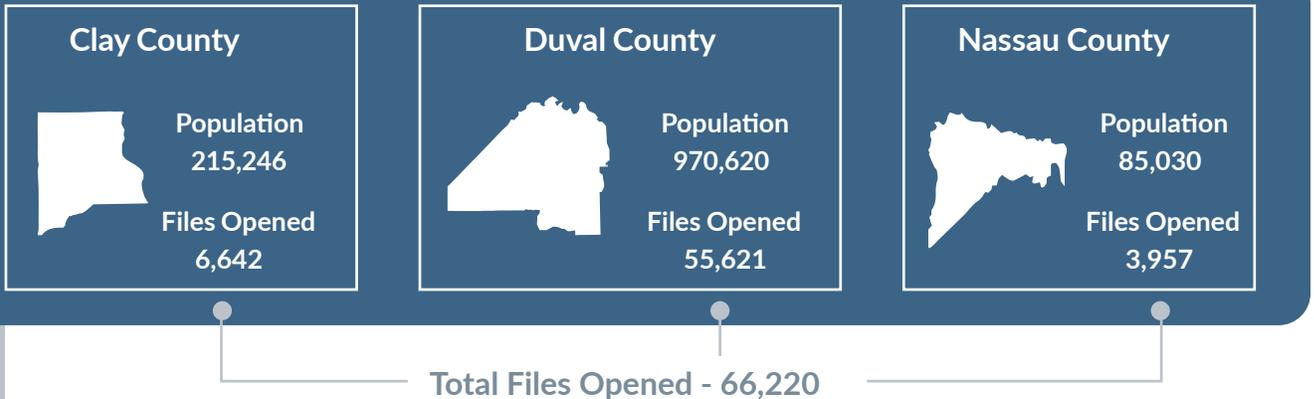


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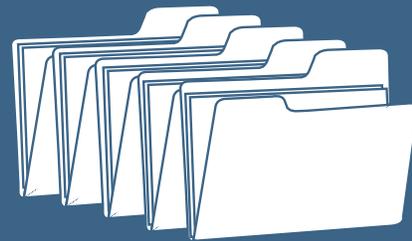


sao4th.com

Our Office at a Glance



Licenses obtained through KEYS 2 Drive **825**



Number of Public Records requests fulfilled **1,640**

Dollars and Sense

\$5.4 MILLION IN TAX DOLLARS SAVED



\$1.55 MILLION TO THE STATE OF FLORIDA



THE EXPANDED USE OF CIVIL CITATIONS SAVED MORE THAN \$4.6 MILLION IN 2019.⁶

[1] Court Options, KEYS 2 Drive data, Fourth Judicial Circuit, Duval County, Florida.

[2] Estimated savings is \$734,231.39 based on data received from Fourth Judicial Circuit law enforcement agencies.

[3] The cost to arrest a juvenile is \$5,000. The cost to issue a Civil Citation is \$386, saving \$4,614 for each juvenile issued a civil citation and not arrested. [Florida DJJ Civil Citation Initiative, <https://bit.ly/FLCivCitationInit>, September 22, 2014, pg. 27; Florida DJJ Road map to System Excellence, <https://bit.ly/RoadmapToExcellence>, August 1, 2013, pg. 32; Florida DJJ Civil Citations, <https://bit.ly/DJJPoint>, May 2012, pg. 7. Estimated cost savings from using juvenile pre-arrest diversions rather than arrests is \$4,637,070.

[4] Court Options, KEYS 2 Drive data, Fourth Judicial Circuit, Duval County, Florida.

[5] The Restitution Enforcement Program (REP) is a pre-arrest diversion program designed to give offenders the opportunity to pay restitution and avoid arrest. Restitution is collected by the office on behalf of several state agencies including the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Revenue, the Department of Economic Opportunity, and the Jacksonville Housing Authority. REP collected \$828,309.55.

[6] 1005 Civil Citations were issued in 2019. Civil Citation numbers from the Clerk of the Court include referrals from public schools. Those referrals are not reflected in Department of Juvenile Justice Dashboard numbers.



State Attorney Melissa Nelson joined local and national leaders to open the Crime Gun Intelligence Center.

Crime Gun Intelligence Center Comes Online

The CGIC is a timesaver. A money-saver. And a lifesaver.

Officials from the City of Jacksonville, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and Jacksonville Sheriff's Office joined State Attorney's Office leadership to celebrate the opening of the Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) in May.

Housed in the State Attorney's Office, the interagency collaboration provides for the immediate collection, management, and analysis of crime gun evidence to quickly link specific guns to crimes and specific crimes to criminals.

At the CGIC, law enforcement uses technologies like the ATF National Tracing Center, National Integrated Ballistic Information Network, and ShotSpotter to "connect the dots" to quickly generate real-time crime leads. Investigators use the technology to connect guns with other crimes and suspects.



ATF Acting Director Regina Lombardo (second from right) joins officials to learn more about the innovative center.

"Intelligence leads to prevention," said State Attorney Melissa Nelson.

The center is the culmination of the partnership among Nelson, Mayor Lenny Curry, and Sheriff Mike Williams, all of whom are invested in technology-driven strategies to keep the community safer. Mayor Curry and the Jacksonville City Council invested \$1 million toward making the center a reality, while Sheriff Williams and the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office oversee day-to-day operations.

ATF Acting Director Regina Lombardo said the Center "is a game changer for law enforcement The ATF is proud to support our partners as we work together to investigate and disrupt trigger pullers and their sources of crime guns."

SHOTSPOTTER + NIBIN LEADING TO REAL-TIME RESULTS

Without this technology these three crimes would have never been connected. NIBIN was the key to linking and solving them.



Just after 2 a.m. **Jan. 25, 2019**, officers responded to a ShotSpotter alert at W. 7th and Barnett streets to find Phillip Gardner dead from gunshot wounds. No one called 911 to report the shooting; no witnesses came forward. Fired cartridge casings were recovered and sent to the firearms lab for entry into the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN).

On **Feb. 1, 2019**, officers responded to a ShotSpotter alert on Barnett Street and found Pernell Dove critically injured from gunfire. No one called 911— without ShotSpotter, Dove would likely have died. The shooting was captured on a Real Time Crime Center camera and a suspect description was obtained. The casings were recovered and placed into NIBIN. Within a day, they were linked to the Gardner shooting.



On **Feb. 6, 2019**, Tom Daniels was found shot to death inside his home north of Downtown. Neighbors heard gunshots, but there were no witnesses. Fired casings were recovered and placed into NIBIN. Within a day, they were linked to the Dove and Gardner shootings.

Homicide detectives interviewed Daniels' family and Jamin Tolliver, Daniels' stepson, was determined a person of interest. When interviewed, Tolliver denied owning a firearm or being involved in Daniels' death. Detectives from all three cases coordinated their efforts.



On **March 4, 2019**, a search warrant was issued for Tolliver's home and a handgun was recovered that forensically matched all three shootings. With the assistance of ATF, investigators determined Tolliver purchased the firearm on Jan. 21, 2019 — four days before the first murder.

On **March 6, 2019**, Tolliver was arrested for attempted murder and armed robbery in relation to the Dove shooting. On **March 25, 2019**, Tolliver was interviewed again and confessed to shooting all three victims and has been charged with those crimes.



JAMIN
TOLLIVER

Focused and Strategic

A New Approach Toward Violent Crime

In early 2019, the State Attorney's Office finalized a shift within the office's Targeted Prosecution Unit to better enhance the response to area violent crime.

The unit was established to address those individuals who have demonstrated they are more dangerous and violent than most within the community. A large percentage of the gun violence in the Fourth Judicial Circuit is committed by a small number of individuals. The focused response of Targeted Prosecution can have a significant impact.

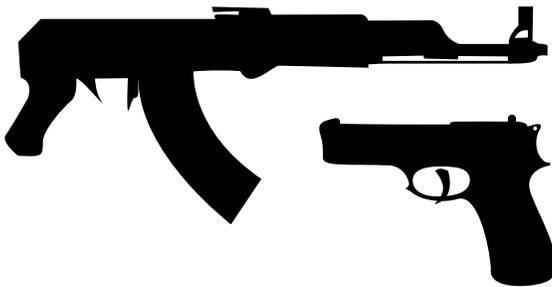
To better identify, investigate, and prosecute those offenders, Targeted Prosecution was divided into two divisions — reactive and proactive.

"The goal is simple: to enhance public safety," said State Attorney Melissa Nelson.

The reactive group works closely with law enforcement, state, and federal partners and uses every legislative tool available to address those most serious, violent offenders and those who use firearms to carry out their crimes. The proactive group conducts longer-term investigations, often targeting larger groups or organizations committing violent crime.

The proactive group is led by Assistant State Attorney Matt O'Keefe, while the reactive group is led by Assistant State Attorney Mark Caliel.

Proactive Efforts Target Felons Who Carry Firearms



A doorbell camera captures a drive-by shooting scene where 35 shots were exchanged.

The State Attorney's Office joined the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office in January 2019 to announce the arrests of several gang members and convicted felons who brandished firearms in self-promoting videos that propagated violence.

The arrests came after a lengthy investigation. These convicted felons are prohibited from possessing a firearm.

Their continued removal from the streets keeps the community safer.

The office's Targeted Prosecution Division continues to address these cases.



Targeted Prosecution

\$360,000 Grant Awarded to Combat Violent Crime



The State Attorney's Office was awarded a \$360,000 "Innovative Prosecution Solutions for Combating Violent Crime" grant by the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

With funds from the program, prosecutors will use data in the development of their violent crime strategies and programs; The Fourth Circuit's innovative approach to fighting violent crime focuses on strengthening its Targeted Prosecution Unit; implementing a robust community engagement plan designed to strengthen community relationships; and, in conjunction with its research partner at FIU, building data collection and analytical capacity to foster crime prevention and effective prosecution.

Digital Shorts Staying Informed

As technology and the case law that addresses it continues to evolve, it is vital for prosecutors to stay educated and hone their skills to maintain success in the courtroom.

One way in which the office accomplishes that is through its internal "Digital Shorts" monthly feature produced by Assistant State Attorney Leah Hogg.

Hogg has produced close to two dozen newsletters for her courtroom colleagues on topics ranging from PowerPoint ethics and Crime Gun Intelligence Center technology to First District Court of Appeals ruling breakdowns and abandoned cellphone protocol.

1ST DCA RULES ON



SAO DIGITAL SHORTS

ISSUE 16

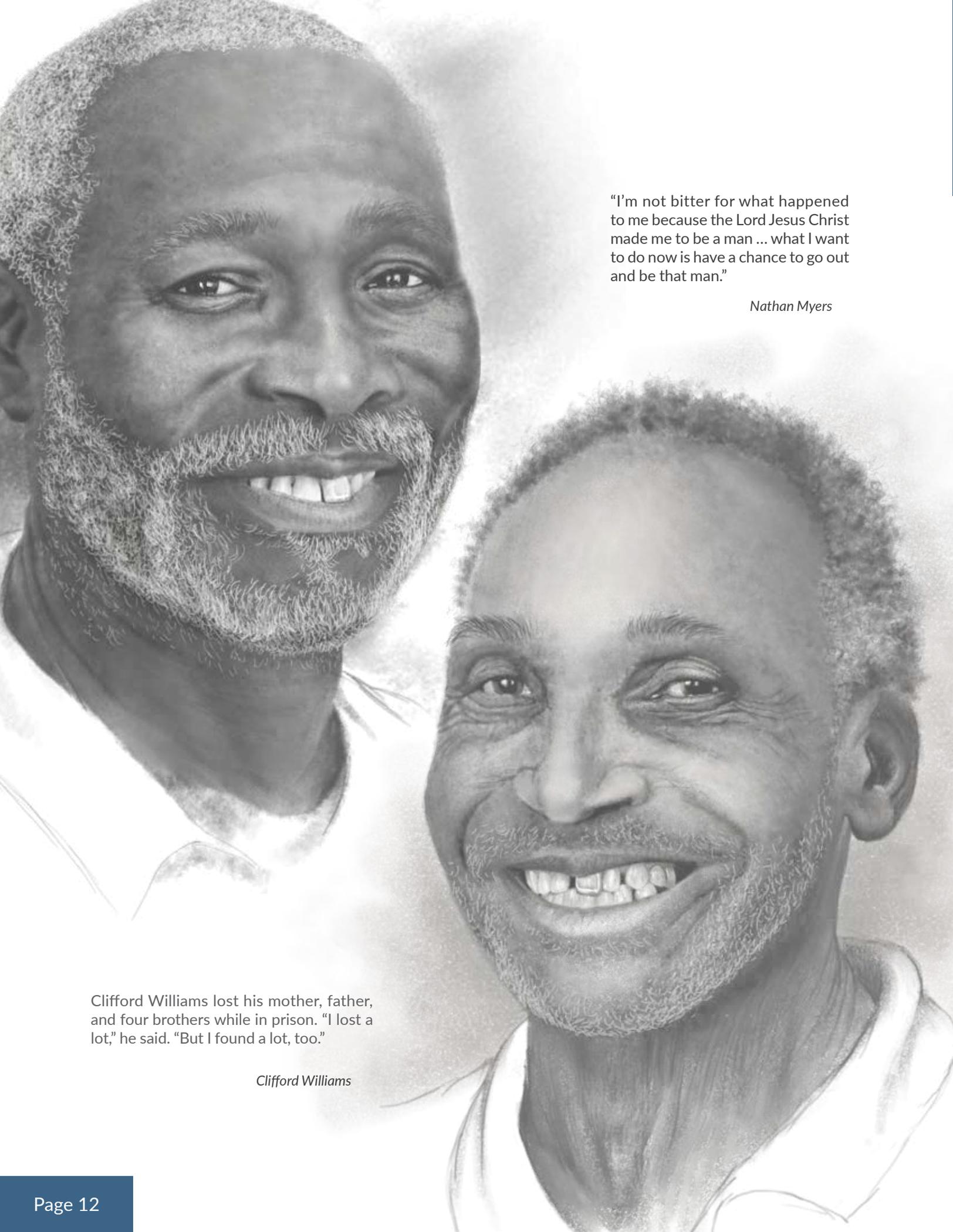
JUNE 2019



COMPELLING PASSWORDS

in *Pollard v State*

"To what extent does the Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination protect a suspect in a criminal case from the compelled disclosure of a password to an electronic communications device in the State's possession?"



"I'm not bitter for what happened to me because the Lord Jesus Christ made me to be a man ... what I want to do now is have a chance to go out and be that man."

Nathan Myers

Clifford Williams lost his mother, father, and four brothers while in prison. "I lost a lot," he said. "But I found a lot, too."

Clifford Williams

Conviction Integrity Review



Nathan Myers and Clifford Williams answer media questions shortly after a judge vacated their verdicts and sentences.

Few cases represent our mission to *Pursue Justice Always* more than the work led by the Conviction Integrity Review (CIR) on the 1976 case of Clifford Williams and Nathan Myers. Nearly 43 years after being convicted of shooting and killing a woman in her home, the two men walked out the front doors of the State Attorney's Office. A yearlong review by the CIR resulted in the office no longer having confidence in their convictions. Each had their verdicts and sentences vacated.

"As prosecutors, we have an ethical obligation to continue to pursue justice when we become aware of material evidence indicating a conviction is not correct," said State Attorney Melissa Nelson.

Myers wrote to the CIR in 2018, claiming he and Williams were innocent and laid out claims that could be confirmed as true, or not. CIR Director Shelley Thibodeau's investigation confirmed every single one of Myers' claims of innocence.

An independent panel unanimously concluded the facts supported the CIR's findings.

The court reviewed the CIR's work and defense motions from both men asking for the convictions to be overturned and sentences vacated. With both men in attendance, a judge granted their requests. The two men hugged. Their family, friends, and supporters shared their joy.

"I am so grateful to the State Attorney's Office and the Innocence Project of Florida for getting me to this point. I lost almost 43 years of my life that I can never get back, but I am looking ahead and will focus on enjoying my freedom with my family," said Myers.

Myers was assisted by the Innocence Project of Florida, while Williams was assisted by the pro bono efforts of Holland & Knight.

About the Conviction Integrity Review

The first of its kind in Florida for a prosecutor's office, the CIR reviews and investigates plausible post-conviction claims of actual innocence by those whose prosecutions originated in the Fourth Judicial Circuit.

In 2019, the CIR partnered with the FIU School of Law, whose law students reviewed some of the petitions submitted to our office. The CIR would like to thank Professor Karen Gottlieb, and the law students for their partnership.

For more about CIR, see the CIR web page at <http://bit.ly/SAO4CIR>



See the full CIR report on their case at <http://bit.ly/CIRReportWilliamsMyers>.

JJAC Report Complete

JJAC Issues Final Report

Following a year and a half of comprehensive work, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) presented State Attorney Melissa Nelson with its recommendations.

Nelson tasked the independent 23-member group of juvenile justice and community stakeholders to review the office's juvenile diversion programs, identify nationally recognized best practices, and make recommendations about prospective successful programming.

Among the recommendations were to transfer juvenile diversion from the State Attorney's Office to the City of Jacksonville's Kids Hope Alliance; implement a case management structure that tailor services and programs based on a needs-assessment instrument; eliminate jail tours from prevention and diversion programming; and consider implementing a Young Adult Court.



Members of the JJAC with State Attorney Melissa Nelson.

Committee Members

- Buddy Schulz (chair)
- The Honorable Suzanne Bass
- Jim Clark
- The Honorable Brian Davis
- Pamela Davis
- Rory Diamond
- Kevin Gay
- Nat Glover
- Dr. Jeff Goldhagen
- Shelley Grant
- Marcus Haile
- Gretchen Hamm
- Elder Lee Harris
- Bill Hodges
- Alan Louder
- Michael Meyers
- Lara Nezami
- Deloris Patterson O'Neal
- The Honorable Jack Schemer
- Anthony Stinson
- Nina Waters
- Vicki Waytowich
- Donna Webb

*Special thanks to Holland & Knight for providing space for the committee to conduct its work.



To see the full report, visit <https://bit.ly/JJACReport>.

Guided by Data

Race, Ethnicity, and Prosecution

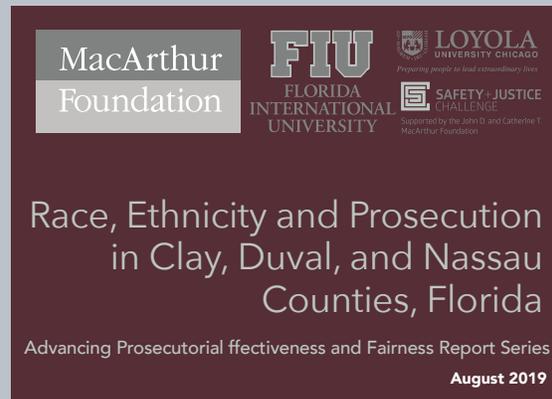
The State Attorney's Office's continuing partnership with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and Florida International University resulted in the release of a second report centered on race, ethnicity, and prosecution. After a review of nearly 89,000 cases over two years, researchers found that race was not an influential factor in filing decisions or reducing charges.

"We cannot achieve the important goal of improving public safety without an unwavering commitment to fairness and impartiality," said State Attorney Melissa Nelson.

U.S. District Judge Brian Davis, who moderated a panel discussion on the findings at a community forum, said the study shows the Fourth Judicial Circuit is "at the vanguard of criminal justice reform."

"I'm excited about the fact that prosecutors and justice system players are starting to look to data to answer questions where we know the system is skewed in ways that we're all bothered by," said Davis.

The data will be used to develop prosecutorial performance indicators, which will be part of the third and final study to be released in the future.



Florida International University professor Besiki Kutateladze, State Attorney Melissa Nelson, U.S. District Judge Brian Davis, Brian Coughlin of the Jacksonville Bar Association, and Latoya Williams Shelton of the DW Perkins Bar Association took part in a community forum on race and prosecution in September 2019 following the release of the study.



Read the Race and Prosecution Report at <https://bit.ly/SAO4RaceReport>.

Smart Justice

I got the opportunity to tell my offender how I felt.

I met with my offender to know why I was targeted.

Through this program my voice was heard.

This helped me move on with my life.

WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

Restorative Justice emphasizes accountability for criminal behavior and the ensuing harm.

Restorative Justice Program Serves Victims of Crime

In its continuing effort to better serve crime victims, the State Attorney's Office successfully secured federal funding to broaden its smart justice initiatives. These funds have been used to hire a Restorative Justice Victim Specialist and support a pilot program to assist crime victims. The specialist is the point-of-contact and liaison for staff and attorneys and plays a key role in this restorative justice initiative, the first of its kind in Florida.

The program began in the office's Juvenile Division and works with the Center for Children's Rights to implement restorative justice sessions between crime victims and the juvenile offenders.



Juvenile Director Laura Lothman Lambert talks with Restorative Justice specialist Nick May and Assistant State Attorney Jack Moran about a case in which restorative justice elements were used.

Successful KEYS 2 DRIVE Expands to Nassau County



When it launched in 2018, the goal of the KEYS 2 Drive program was to help people obtain a valid driver's license and get back on the road legally. That goal in 2019 was met, as more than 1,200 people to date have earned their license through the program.

It worked so well that the program expanded to Nassau County in 2019 through the collaboration of the Nassau County Clerk of Courts, Nassau County judiciary, and Nassau County law enforcement.

After launching midyear, KEYS 2 Drive served nearly 170 people in Nassau County, putting them on the road to breaking the cycle of suspensions, fines, and fees.



Learn more about the Keys 2 Drive program at <http://bit.ly/KEYS2Drive>

Juvenile Civil Citation

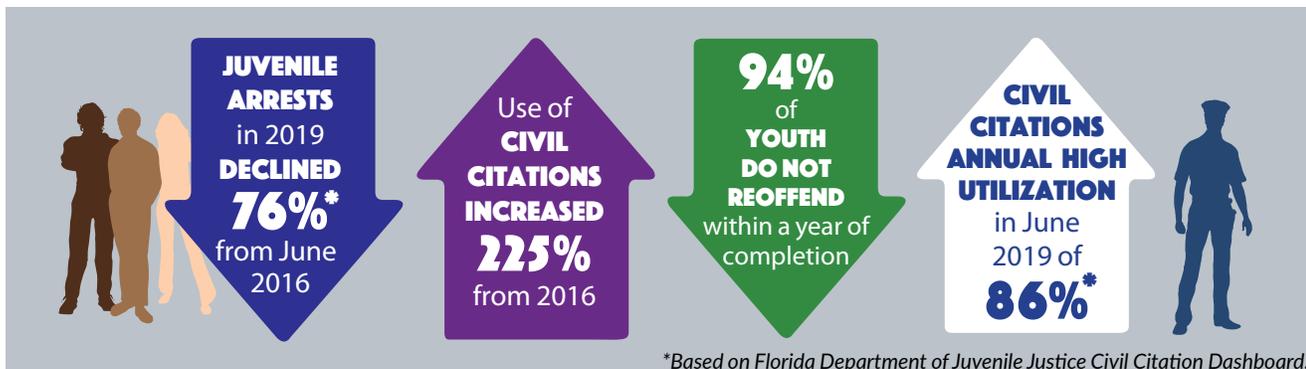
Juvenile Civil Citation a Success Story

In May 2017, law enforcement from every agency in the Fourth Judicial Circuit and community stakeholders signed a historic agreement to expand the use of juvenile civil citations.

More than two years later, the results are clear: the smart justice program is working.

Two years after the agreement was signed, stakeholders convened as part of a panel discussion to talk about the successes, challenges, real-life impacts, and future of the program.

“This is a success story,” said Simone Marsteller, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Secretary. “If you intervene quickly and early enough with the right element of accountability and the right intervention, it works to keep kids out of the juvenile justice system.”



Reaching a National Audience

The success of juvenile civil citations in the Fourth Judicial Circuit was recognized nationally.

Juvenile Director Laura Lothman Lambert was featured in the summer 2019 edition of the American Bar Association’s Criminal Justice publication after authoring “Juvenile Civil Citation: An Effective Innovation in Reducing Crime and Recidivism.”

Lambert’s article highlights the rise of juvenile civil citation issuance in Northeast Florida in the last several years, as well as the financial and safety benefits such citations have provided the community.



Read the ABA article at <http://bit.ly/CivilCitationsLothman>.

Working with Our Communities to Solve Crime

In 2019, the State Attorney's Office launched its Community Crime Strategies Initiative.

Recognizing community trust is an essential element of any effective crime strategy, the office partnered with the City of Jacksonville's Citizen Planning Advisory Committees (CPAC) and a number of Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Advisory Watch Committees to foster the communication to build that trust.

Stepping outside the traditional role of prosecutor, the office seeks to establish relationships in Jacksonville's neighborhoods, listen to community concerns, and find common sense solutions to community problems and issues.



Assistant State Attorneys Terence Martin and Octavius Holliday with Community Crime Strategies Coordinator Brian Jefferson.

Office Part of Statewide Opioid, Sentencing Task Forces



The first Statewide Task Force on Opioid Drug Abuse meeting.

Gov. Ron DeSantis appointed State Attorney Melissa Nelson to two important workgroups.

Nelson was named to the Statewide Task Force on Opioid Drug Abuse, chaired by Attorney General Ashley Moody. The group developed a statewide strategy to identify best practices to combat the opioid epidemic.

DeSantis also appointed Nelson to the state's Criminal Punishment Code Task Force, created by the Legislature to review, evaluate, and recommend changes for sentencing and rankings of noncapital felony offenses.



See the groups' work at <http://bit.ly/TFOpioid> and <http://bit.ly/CPCFlorida>

Office Joins National Council on Criminal Justice

In 2019, State Attorney Melissa Nelson joined a nationwide group of leaders seeking to improve the criminal justice system with her appointment as a trustee to the Council on Criminal Justice.

Independent and nonpartisan, the Council is an invitational membership organization and think-tank that advances understanding of the criminal justice policy choices facing the country. It builds consensus for solutions that enhance safety and justice.

See more about the Council at <https://counciloncj.org>



SEXUAL ASSAULT KIT INITIATIVE (SAKI)

2019 ASSEMBLY OF CITIES

November 13-15, 2019
Jacksonville, Florida



Members of the State Attorney's Office at the conference.

Jacksonville Hosts National Sexual Assault Conference

The State Attorney's Office, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Women's Center of Jacksonville, and other partners spearheaded the effort to bring this important annual conference to Jacksonville.

Over 250 local and national law enforcement members, prosecutors, forensic nurses, and advocates devoted to stopping sexual violence traveled to Jacksonville in November to attend the 2019 Assembly of Cities Conference. Part of the nationwide Sexual Assault Kit Initiative, the conference seeks to educate attendees on ways to improve their community's response to sexual assault.

The 2019 theme was "DNA: Timeless Evidence" and featured a multitude of speakers and sessions focused on advances in DNA technology, genetic genealogy, cold case investigations, and media and public concerns. Attendees learned about techniques and improvements in detecting offenders, analyzing evidence, and prosecuting those who commit these heinous acts.

In the Courtroom

1993 Cold Case Solved



Bonnie Haim

More than 25 years after her disappearance, there was finally justice for Bonnie Haim.

When Bonnie disappeared one winter morning in 1993, she left behind her 3-year-old son, Aaron, and a mystery that perplexed the community for more than 20 years.

It was 2014 when Aaron discovered remains buried on the side of their family home, while renovating the home. DNA tests confirmed the remains to be his missing mother, Bonnie Haim.

After the discovery of Bonnie's body, it was determined by the medical examiner that the cause of death was homicide. Her husband, Michael Haim, was arrested.

After a week-long trial, a jury found Haim guilty of second-degree murder. He was sentenced to life in prison. This case was prosecuted by Homicide Director **Alan Mizrahi** and Chief Assistant State Attorney **Mac Heavener** in April 2019.

"For 26 years we searched for answers to our many questions," said Liz Peak, Bonnie Haim's sister. "... However, none of us wavered in our belief of what happened to Bonnie and who did it. Over the past 26 years many people have committed themselves to uncover the truth and finding justice for Bonnie. We got justice, but we don't have Bonnie."

Murderer and Rapist Sentenced to Death



Davidson was prosecuted by Chief Assistant L.E. Hutton, Clay Director Pam Hazel and State Attorney Melissa Nelson. (Photo: Will Dickey, Florida Times-Union)

In 2019, the Clay County community was able to finally move past one of the area's most brutal crimes. It was an outcome five years in the making.

Donald Davidson was found guilty of murdering Roseanne Welsh, kidnapping her daughter, and sexually battering the young girl before being apprehended. He was sentenced to death for these crimes.

"This case shocked the conscience of Clay County – a kidnapping of a child and rape and murder of her mother," said State Attorney Melissa Nelson. "Today brings an end to at least one chapter of the ongoing nightmare for Rosie Welsh's children, her husband, and family."



See more trial outcomes and office news at <https://bit.ly/SAO4News>.

Notable Convictions

3 Men Guilty in Child's Murder

A botched illegal gun trade in the parking lot of a Westside business center led to gunfire and the tragic death of 7-year-old Heidy Rivas Villanueva in August 2018.

Heidy, while waiting in a car with her family to pick up food at a restaurant, was caught in the crossfire from the firearm deal gone bad.

An extensive investigation, aided by surveillance video, led to the arrests of Trevonte Phoenix, Abrion Price, and Stanley Harris.

Phoenix and Price both pleaded guilty to second-degree felony murder and each was sentenced to 30 years in prison. Harris pleaded guilty to third-degree murder and was sentenced to 25 years. ASA **Mark Caliel** prosecuted this case.



Heidy Rivas Villanueva



Tamia Sanders

Guilty Verdict in Shooting Death of Tamia Sanders

A heated dispute between a woman and a group led to the tragic shooting death of 14-year-old Tamia Sanders.

Her killer, Bryan Goggins, went to a home just north of Downtown because his mother had been arguing with someone there. Goggins confronted a family sitting outside, then pulled out a firearm and began shooting. One of the bullets struck Sanders in the head, killing her instantly.

In 2019, Goggins was found guilty of second-degree murder and other charges and sentenced to four consecutive life sentences. ASA **Ashley Young Terry** prosecuted this case.

Young Hero Saves Mother After Shooting

The early morning hours of August 14, 2018, forever changed the lives of Farah Basim Abdulj Al Gburi and her young son, Sam.

Farah and 5-year-old Sam left their Baymeadows-area apartment just before 7 a.m. to walk to school. They were confronted by her estranged husband and Sam's father, Dheyaa Khaleel Mohammed Mohammed. He shot Farah twice in the chest and fled, leaving her paralyzed. Young Sam reacted swiftly and ran to a neighbor's house to alert them. First responders arrived and, thanks to Sam's quick actions, were able to save his mother's life.

The State Attorney's Office honored Sam with its Junior Lifesaving Award as part of its annual Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer awards.

Farah said her son's award is not just a piece of paper. "It's very, very, very special," she said. "I will put that in his room to make him remember what he did — always."

Mohammed pleaded guilty to attempted first-degree murder and was sentenced to 25 years in Florida State Prison. This case was prosecuted by former Chief Assistant **Mac Heavener**.



State Attorney Melissa Nelson with Farah Basim Abdulj Al Gburi.

From The Headlines

Arcade Robbery Ends in Murder - Gunman Guilty

Cecil Burney II was found guilty of First-Degree Murder and other charges for his role in the March 2018 homicide at Spin City Sweepstakes. Surveillance

video shows Burney and another man enter the business and take money by force. When a security guard opened fire, Burney fled and opened fire, killing

one of his accomplices. Burney was sentenced to life in prison. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **Chris Huband** and **Tom Mangan**.

Three sentenced for murder of veteran

Doug Cercy, Ray Jones, and Jennifer Schulte entered guilty pleas for their role in the April 2017 murder of 86-year-old veteran Melvin Clark. Clark was robbed in premeditated fashion, driven to an isolated

area, and his throat was slit. Cercy and Jones received life sentences, while Schulte received 40 years in prison. The case was successfully prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **Chris Huband** and **Lara Mattina**.

New Year's Day Shooter Sentenced

Tairrah McGriff was sentenced to 21 years in prison after being found guilty of Manslaughter with a Firearm and other counts in the New Year's Day killing of Sahara Barkley. The shooting happened at a gas station after a confrontation and foot

chase through a Jacksonville Riverside neighborhood which occurred after Barkley's car was stolen. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **Coreylyn Brown** and **Dan Skinner**.

Jacksonville man found guilty of murder

Breon Hollings was found guilty of Second-Degree Murder and Aggravated Assault in July 2019 for the murder of Eric White. Hollings was one of a number of people who ambushed White and his girlfriend. Hollings,

who is a known gang member, was later arrested at his home while he was streaming on Facebook Live. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **Lara Mattina** and **LaTasha Campbell**.

Man Committed as Sexually Violent Predator

William Barber was unanimously committed by a jury as a Sexual Violent Predator. He was court-ordered to confinement at the Florida Civil Commitment Center in Arcadia, Florida, for long-term control, care, and treatment. Barber's first arrest for a sexually motivated offense was in 1998 in Escambia County and, over the next 15 years, he would be arrested on five additional sexually motivated offenses in Florida. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **Anna Hixon** and **Jessica Hensley**.

2016 DUI crash leads to Manslaughter conviction

Lark Hodge was found guilty of Driving Under the Influence (Manslaughter) and sentenced to five years in prison. In the early hours of May 29, 2016, Hodge initiated a head-on collision. Hodge, who was under the legal age to drink, admitted that she had been drinking and fell asleep at the wheel. According to medical records, Hodge's Blood Alcohol Level at the time of the crash was .094. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **John Kalinowski** and **Christina Stifler**.



SAKI hit leads to arrest, life in prison for McClusky

Mikel McClusky was found guilty by a jury of two counts of Sexual Battery and sentenced to life in prison for a crime that took place more than a decade ago. On Feb. 17, 2006, McClusky met the victim walking in the Arlington area of town and offered her a ride before forcibly raping her. In 2017, the victim's sexual assault

examination kit was submitted to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement as part of the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative in the State Attorney's Office. McClusky, already a Sexual Offender, was identified from the kit. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **Leigh Rosenbloom** and **Tonya Patterson-Barge**.

Quick-thinking hero son saves mom after shooting



Sam Al Gburi, pictured with State Attorney's Office investigator David Humphrey, received a special honor for his life-saving actions at the office's internal awards and recognitions in 2019.

See more about Sam's story and the case behind it on Page 21.

Former Housing Authority official guilty of sexual battery

Mitchell Ray Sr. was found guilty of two counts of Sexual Battery in January 2019 for using his position at the Jacksonville Housing Authority to coerce victims into having sexual relations with him. He threatened victims

with eviction if they did not comply. Ray was sentenced to 15 years in prison. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **Cate Waugh** and **Tonya Patterson-Barge**.

Moore Sentenced to Life for Sexual Battery on a Minor

Paul Moore was found guilty by a jury of Sexual Battery, Lewd or Lascivious Molestation, and Showing Obscene Material to Minors and sentenced to life in prison. Moore sexually battered a minor victim between September 2015 and January 2016 and told her not to talk about the sexual abuse because he would go to jail. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **Leigh Rosenbloom** and **Jessica Hensley**.

Woman sentenced for DUI Manslaughter

Kelley Permenter received a sentence of more than 10 years in prison for the DUI Manslaughter death of 10-year-old Hunter Cope in March 2017. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **John Kalinowski** and **Jackie Hutchins**.

Scheme to steal property ends in conviction

Jarrel Mapp was found guilty of Organized Fraud and other counts in February 2019 for his role in extorting money from property owners. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys **David Johnston** and **Terry Livanos**.

Dedicated Pursuit of Justice



Heavener Returns to Federal Practice

After once again serving the people of the Fourth Judicial Circuit, Chief Assistant State Attorney Mac Heavener returned to federal practice in the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Eastern District of Tennessee. In January 2017, Heavener joined newly elected State Attorney Melissa Nelson at the SAO to perform a vital leadership role in her administration. His achievements included revamping myriad office wide polices, improving the office's discovery standards, and overseeing the Targeted Prosecution and Human Rights Division. He previously served in the office from 2000-07 before heading to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida. "Mac has been a great chief assistant, excellent trial prosecutor, devoted teacher, and loyal friend," said State Attorney Melissa Nelson. "The people of the Fourth Circuit are better for his service. We will miss him."

Honoring a Career of Integrity



Former State Attorney Harry Shorstein led the office from 1992-2008, spearheading initiatives in several areas of the office which improved the community as a whole.

"This is a great honor bestowed by great friends," Shorstein told the crowd at the conclusion of the ceremony.

With his family, friends, and former colleagues in attendance, Shorstein was honored for his work during a portrait unveiling in August at the Duval County Courthouse.



PURSUE
JUSTICE
ALWAYS



Being a Part of

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Chester Bedell Inn of Court
Clay County Veterans Court
Partnership for a Healthier Nassau
Downtown Homelessness Task Force
Mandarin High School
Sulzbacher Center
Cold Case Advisory Commission
Hope Haven
Jean Ribault High School
William M. Raines High School
Andrew Jackson High School
Duncan Fletcher High School
Ability Housing
Mayport Middle School
Global Jax
Southside Middle School
Hubbard House
I'm A Star Foundation
ICARE
Malivai Washington Youth Foundation
Clay Law Day
Jacksonville Women Lawyer's Association
Leadership Jacksonville
Nimmons Federal Practice Seminar
Eugene Butler Leadership Academy
Women's Council of Jacksonville
Clay County Police Memorial Day
Senior Expo, City of Jacksonville
Rufus Payne Elementary
Child Friendly Cities Initiative
Matthew Gilbert Middle School
Girl Scouts of Gateway Council
Jacksonville Bar Young Lawyer's Section
Nelson Mandela International Day
Animal Care and Protective Services
Jacksonville Area Legal Aid
Scam Smart Program with CFO Jimmy Patronis' Office

Pursuing justice in our community means building relationships. In 2019, members of the State Attorney's Office interacted with the community throughout Clay, Duval, and Nassau counties.



Hope Haven's on-the-job training program.



Trimble family at the Wounded Warrior Project holiday party.



ASA Octavius Holliday extends support to senior citizens.

NASSAU

CLAY

Our Community



ASAs Marcus Isom and London Kite participate in a school career fair.



Members of the office took part in the Fall Into Reading event at R. V. Daniels Elementary School.



Trial Support Services Specialist Jim McMillan with students from the Young Men's and Women's Leadership Academy at Eugene J. Butler Middle School.

- Jacksonville Bar Association
- Neighborhood Walks
- D.W. Perkins Bar Association
- Pinedale Elementary School
- R.V. Daniels Elementary School
- Gateway Community Services
- Drug Free Duval
- Freed to Run
- Operation New Hope
- Special Olympics
- Wounded Warrior Project
- City Streets to Student Athletes
- National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
- Women Business Owners of NE Florida
- We The People
- Project Cold Case
- Westside Council
- Rethreaded
- Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
- Republican Women of Clay
- Meninak Club of Jacksonville
- Florida Coastal School of Law
- Mandarin Women's Club
- Florida Bar Annual Conference
- 4th Annual Day of the Girl
- Community Town Hall at FSCJ
- Federalist Society
- Fernandina Beach Rotary Club
- Orange Park Women's Club
- International Association of Chiefs of Police
- Ribault Future Lawyers
- The Community Foundation of Northeast Florida
- SAKI Assembly of Cities
- Federal Naturalization Ceremony
- University of Florida Levin College of Law
- Florida State University College of Law
- Florida International University

Our Clay County Office



The Clay County Office saw an infusion of new leadership in 2019 with the promotion of Assistant State Attorney Pam Hazel (second from left) as director and Ashley Young Terry (left) as a division chief. The two joined the already talented office and hit the ground running to serve the people of Clay County. One of their accomplishments in 2019 was heading to Tallahassee for the annual Clay Day to meet with law enforcement and area leaders State Sen. Rob Bradley (pictured) and State Rep. Travis Cummings to discuss the office's efforts.



The Clay County team in 2019 remained active in the community, representing the office at Clay Law Day (pictured with attorneys and staff) and supporting area organizations that work on behalf of victims.

Clay County Office
825 N. Orange Avenue
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043
904-269-6319

Our Nassau County Office



Staff members in the State Attorney's Nassau County office gather in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month and support of Micah's Place, a certified domestic violence center serving survivors of domestic violence in Nassau County.



The Nassau County Office also supports the community it serves. Members of the State Attorney's Nassau County office present Christmas gifts to a local family during the annual Community Christmas Gift celebration.

Nassau County Office
76347 Veterans Way, Suite 2105
Yulee, FL 32097
904-548-4700



Law Enforcement Corridor is Unveiled

To honor our law enforcement partners, the State Attorney's Office created a hallway featuring historic photos dedicated to those who serve. Many agencies throughout the Fourth Judicial Circuit are represented.

Ron Foster of Stellar Group, Inc. generously sponsored the display of these historic photographs.



The OLEO Awards



The State Attorney's Office honored the hard work of area law enforcement through its Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer awards. The ceremony was hosted by special guest, former Jacksonville Jaguars linebacker Tom McManus. The awards were sponsored by Stellar.

Junior Lifesaving Award, Sam Al Gburi

Bravery Award, Mark Hunter, Nassau County Sheriff's Office

Bravery Award, William Eierman, Jacksonville Beach Police Department

Lifesaving Award, Jimmy Stalnaker, Nassau County Sheriff's Office

Meritorious Service Award, Melissa Bujeda and Christian Hancock, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office

Investigative Excellence Award, Darren McNeely, University of North Florida

Citizen Partnership Award, Murray Kramer, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office

Leadership Award, Deloris O'Neal, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office

K-9 Valor Award, K-9 FANG, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (accepted posthumously by his handler, M.L. Herrera)

Civilian Public Safety Award, Jay Duguay, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office



Tom McManus and Deputy Jimmy Stalnaker



Officer Deloris O'Neal



Officer M. L. Herrera



Officer Murray Kramer



STATE ATTORNEY AWARD

Assistant State Attorney London Kite received the State Attorney Award, a special recognition given by State Attorney Melissa Nelson during the office's internal awards ceremony.

A Year of Exceptional Work

Each year, the office hosts an awards ceremony to recognize the exceptional efforts of attorneys, investigators, and support staff from the past year. This year's event recognized individuals and several groups with honors for their service to the Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida.

Congratulations to:

- **Outstanding Administrative Support** – Chris King, Information Technology
- **Outstanding Trial Support** – Cody Taylor, paralegal
- **Outstanding Investigator** – T.C. O'Steen, investigator
- **Leadership** – Donna Cornellier, unit supervisor
- **Community Service** – LaTasha Campbell, assistant state attorney
- **Group Achievement** – *The State of Florida v. Henry Hayes and Kquame Richardson* trial team.
- **Significant Achievement** – Mark Caliel, Targeted Prosecution director
- **Trial Advocacy** – Korey Milo, assistant state attorney
- **Rookie of the Year** – Lair Hall, assistant state attorney
- **Distinguished Service** – Zina Jiad, victim specialist
- **State Attorney Award** – London Kite, Attorney Development and Select Prosecutions director.
- **Mission, Values, and Vision** – Laura Lothman Lambert, Juvenile director



Outstanding Trial Support



Distinguished Service



Significant Achievement



Outstanding Investigator



Community Service



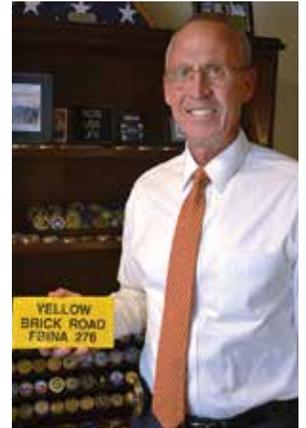
Trial Advocacy



CELEBRATING



SAO Investigator Richard Trew and FDLE Special Agent Courtney Harrison were recognized in Washington, D.C., by ATF for human trafficking investigation/prosecution efforts as part of National Crime Victims' Rights Week.



Chief Investigator Tim Quick attended the FBI National Academy, fulfilling a lifelong dream. The nationally renowned academy is an intensive 10-week training program for partner law enforcement agencies held at FBI Headquarters in Quantico, Virginia.



Smart Justice Coordinator Coral Messina was appointed to Operation New Hope's board of directors.



State Attorney Melissa Nelson received the inaugural House of Mandela Reflecting Freedom for Public Service Award.



Assistant State Attorneys Sabrina Smith and Marcus Isom, as well as Prosecution Support Specialist Imanni Porter (far right), graduated from the 2019 Leadership Jacksonville Next Generation program.



Assistant State Attorney Coreylyn Brown was recognized by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office as its homicide prosecutor of the year. Brown was also honored with the Judicial Victim Advocate award at the annual VAAC luncheon as part of National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

OUR OWN



Assistant State Attorneys Lara Mattina and Kimano Edwards were accepted into the Leadership Jacksonville Class of 2020.



Assistant State Attorney Katelyn Johnston received board certification in Criminal Trial Law. Assistant State Attorney Kelli Swaney (not pictured) received board certification in Juvenile Law.



Assistant State Attorney Erin Wolfson was recognized by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office for the successful investigation and prosecution of Richard Moffett.



Assistant State Attorneys LaTasha Campbell and Vanessa Wheeler-Sanchez were accepted into the Florida Bar William Reece Leadership Academy Class VII.



Assistant State Attorneys Matt Silverstein, Jackie Hutchins, Marcus Isom, and Alex Fischer at the Jacksonville Bar Young Lawyers Section Chili Cook-Off charity event.



State Attorney Melissa Nelson was honored as the 2019 Children's Champion by Episcopal Children's Services. She shared the award with the Juvenile Division.



Juvenile Director Laura Lambert was recognized by the Jacksonville Business Journal as a 2019 Woman of Influence.

Investigator David Humphrey received the Peer Achievement Award from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, voted on by his colleagues.



The Class of 2019



County Court Division Chief LaTasha Campbell, Director John Kalinowski, State Attorney Melissa Nelson, and Division Chief Katelyn Johnston with new Assistant State Attorneys Jack Moran, Jamie Cona, Dora McClain, Kimano Edwards, Sarah Usman, Gabe Roberts, Sam Mizeras, Brittainy Joyner, Jesse Nardy, Laura Dadowski, and Carly Hazelip.



Kalinowski presents attorney badges to the new attorneys during their swearing-in ceremony.

Welcome to the Team

The State Attorney's Office welcomed a dozen new attorneys as part of its fall 2019 class, hailing from law schools such as the University of Florida, Florida State University, University of Miami, University of Tennessee, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, University of Denver, and Howard University.

They continue to build on the legacy of the office's commitment to recruiting a talented, diverse workforce.



Each class is now commemorated in the office's Hall of History display. It features a picture, if available, of each incoming class since 2000.

Our Plan for the Future

A Public Guide to Our Work

What guides our work?

How do we make decisions?

Are our resources aligned with our priorities?

These are among the many questions our team poses to ensure our everyday actions and work support our mission and long-term goals.

In 2019, we conducted a strategic planning process to better inform the public of the priorities we will pursue over the next three years.

This effort resulted in the release of our Strategic Plan, a first for a state prosecutor's office, that helps us achieve our credo "Pursue Justice Always."

The three-year plan will guide the office's work and is presented to the public as a commitment to accountability and transparency.



Office members during a roundtable discussion about policy.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2022

OFFICE OF THE STATE ATTORNEY
Melissa W. Nelson

Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida
Serving Clay, Duval, and Nassau Counties



OUR PRIORITIES:

1. Pursue Public Safety in Clay, Duval, and Nassau Counties
2. Strengthen Victim Support and Community Trust
3. Expand Office Collaboration with the Community
4. Foster an Innovative and Efficient Office Culture
5. Implement Smart Justice Reforms



See the plan and goals for each priority at <https://bit.ly/SAO4StrategicPlan>.

Moments from 2019



Building Bridges



[@SAO4FL](#)

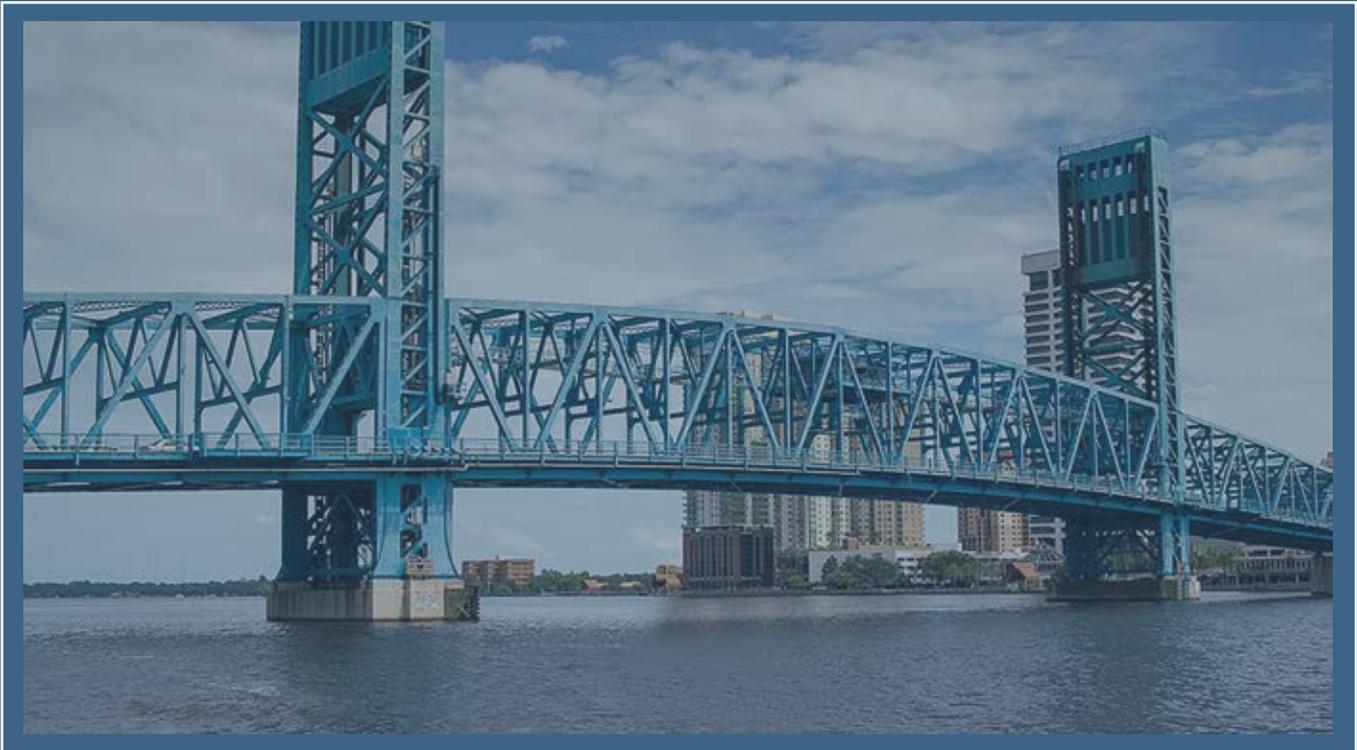


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[sao4th.com](#)

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Pursue Justice Always

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76347 Veterans Way, Suite 2105
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