

State Attorney's Office
Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida

2023 Annual Report

SAO4TH.COM



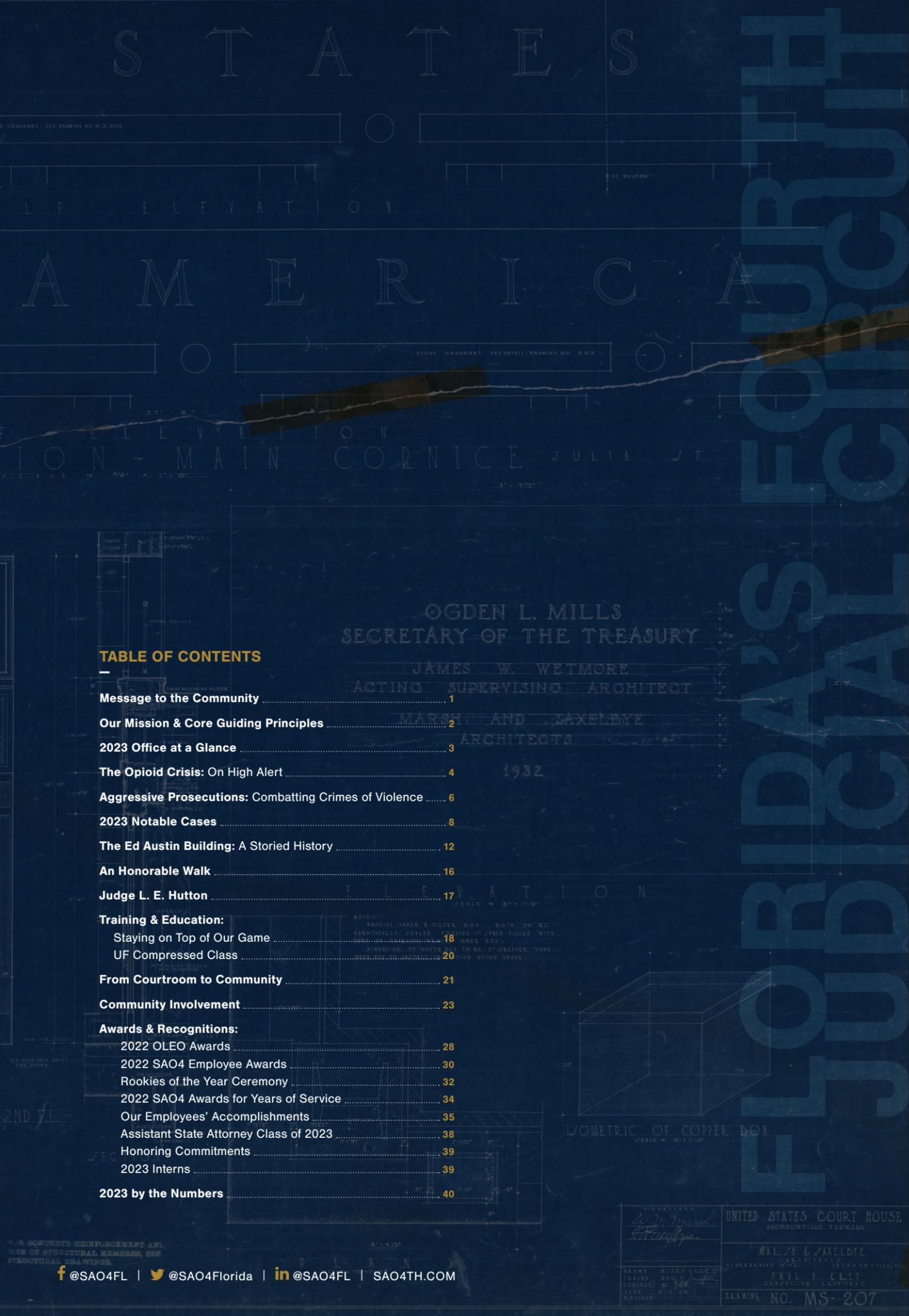
CTIONS • THRU • NORTH • LOBBY • & • STAIR • NO. 1 •
SECTIONS THRU SOUTH LOBBY & STAIR NO. 2 SIMILAR & REVERSED
SECTION AT STAIR LANDING - SEE SECTION THRU STAIR NO. 1 - DWG. NO.

66

SIGNATURES

W. M. Marsh
H. Wallace

UNITED STATES COURT HOUSE
JACKSONVILLE FLORIDA



Melissa W. Nelson
State Attorney for Florida's
Fourth Judicial Circuit

MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY

My position as state attorney brings me face to face with a diverse group of people across our circuit. Often, these introductions are with victims of crime: domestic abuse, robbery, assault, rape, or even loved ones of someone who was murdered. I meet them at one of the most difficult points in their lives.

Over the past few years, I've come across a growing sector of victims: those left behind after a fatal drug overdose. Many, if not most, involve narcotics laced with fentanyl. It's nothing short of a national epidemic — and I am not the first to call it such — that has affected all demographics in our communities at an alarming rate. The Drug Enforcement Agency, in its 2023 year-end review, listed fentanyl as the leading cause of death for Americans 18-45 years old. Just as alarming: seven out of 10 pills tested at the DEA laboratory contained a potentially deadly dose of fentanyl.

Our office has successfully prosecuted more than 200 cases against the myriad drug dealers who distribute these deadly drugs. With each dealer we take off the street, we send the message that actions have consequences. But this problem is so vast that enforcement alone cannot address it. There was more our office could do to expand our efforts.

In 2023, we enhanced our focus to include education and launched our “On High Alert” digital campaign. Utilizing the power of storytelling and social media to amplify the seriousness of the crisis, the five-part video series captured the stories of people touched by this pervasive problem. You can find the series featured on page 4.

This campaign is a new tactic to add to our public safety arsenal — our office and our 300-plus public servants continue to think outside the status quo to address these important issues. You will see examples of it in the courtroom and community throughout the following pages of our seventh annual report.

As I enter my third term in 2025, my commitment to the mission of our office remains steadfast and true. I am increasingly inspired by the men and women with whom I work and their relentless pursuit of justice.

It is my sincere hope that by showcasing the hard work of the office and diving deeper into the issues we confront daily that you, too, will be inspired to join us in our mission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Message to the Community 1
- Our Mission & Core Guiding Principles 2
- 2023 Office at a Glance 3
- The Opioid Crisis: On High Alert 4
- Aggressive Prosecutions: Combatting Crimes of Violence 6
- 2023 Notable Cases 8
- The Ed Austin Building: A Storied History 12
- An Honorable Walk 16
- Judge L. E. Hutton 17
- Training & Education:
 - Staying on Top of Our Game 18
 - UF Compressed Class 20
- From Courtroom to Community 21
- Community Involvement 23
- Awards & Recognitions:
 - 2022 OLEO Awards 28
 - 2022 SAO4 Employee Awards 30
 - Rookies of the Year Ceremony 32
 - 2022 SAO4 Awards for Years of Service 34
 - Our Employees' Accomplishments 35
 - Assistant State Attorney Class of 2023 38
 - Honoring Commitments 39
 - 2023 Interns 39
- 2023 by the Numbers 40



PURSUE
JUSTICE
ALWAYS

Our Mission

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

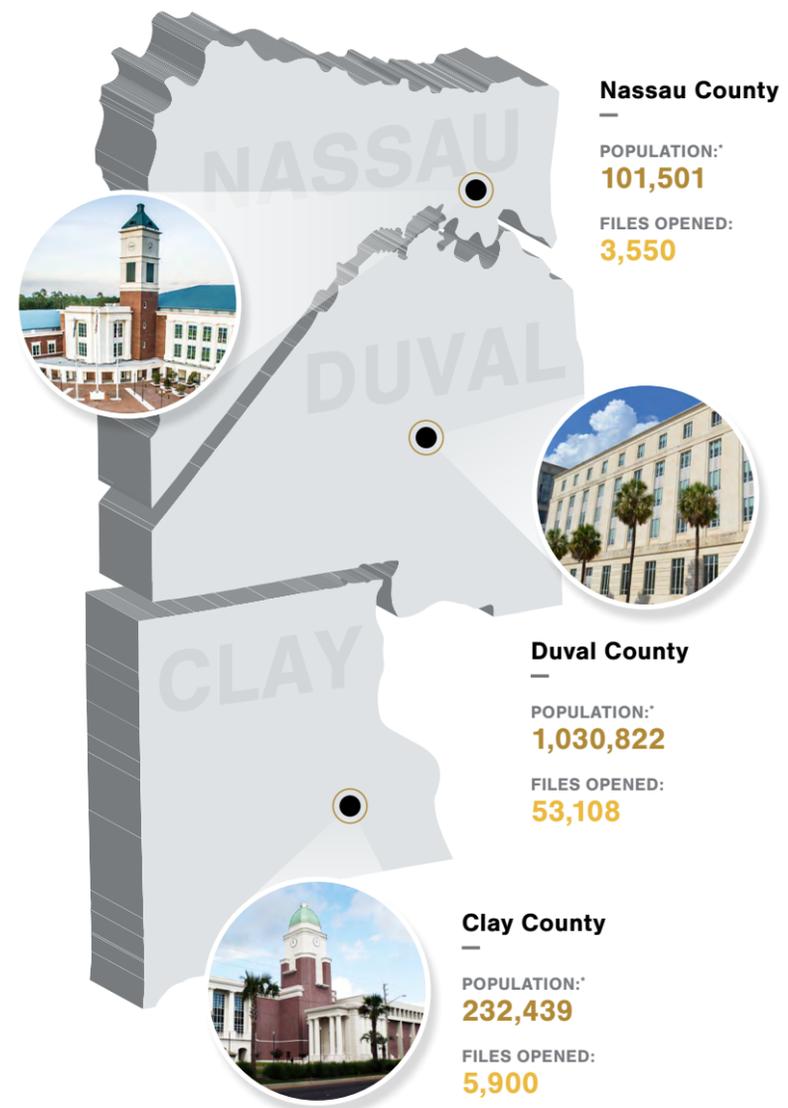


Core Guiding Principles

We will:

- 1 Treat all participants in the criminal justice system with **RESPECT**
- 2 Empower crime victims, and treat them with **DIGNITY**
- 3 Strive for **FAIRNESS** and **IMPARTIALITY** in our use of prosecutorial discretion
- 4 Pursue just punishment and **ACCOUNTABILITY** for those guilty of crimes
- 5 Actively seek **INPUT** from the diverse communities we serve
- 6 Lead with **TRANSPARENCY** in our actions and decision-making
- 7 Seek **EFFECTIVE** and **INNOVATIVE** strategies for preventing and controlling crime
- 8 **SUPPORT** and **EXPLORE** alternatives to the penal system when appropriate
- 9 Act as good **STEWARDS** of public resources entrusted to us for our work
- 10 Stay abreast of **BEST PRACTICES** in our field and employ technology effectively
- 11 **COLLABORATE** with other government and law enforcement agencies and community partners to enhance public safety
- 12 Act with **PROFESSIONALISM**

2023 Office at a Glance



STATE ATTORNEY:	Melissa W. Nelson
TOTAL POPULATION:	1,364,762
TOTAL FILES OPENED:	62,558
TOTAL EMPLOYEES:	327



NUMBER OF PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS CLOSED:	2,045
BUDGET:	\$35 million

Our duty to the people of Northeast Florida comprises two main tenets. The first is to keep people safe by prosecuting criminal offenders. The second is to do justice.

State Attorney Melissa Nelson

THE OPIOID CRISIS

On High Alert

As a society, we rely heavily on parents and teachers to inform children about the dangers of drugs. We then rely on the children to listen and absorb the same message in the same format. As the number of fentanyl deaths continues to climb, the SAO4 wanted to try something new.

"On High Alert," the office's fentanyl awareness campaign, was launched with that goal in mind: to deliver real and devastating stories about fentanyl onto the screens of youth via social media.

The office launched the five-part series on Oct. 19, 2023, with a new video revealed each week on all of the office's social media platforms. The final video aired on local television stations as a public service announcement. The first video was nominated for a "Best of Jax" award from the Jacksonville Film Festival.



What is fentanyl?

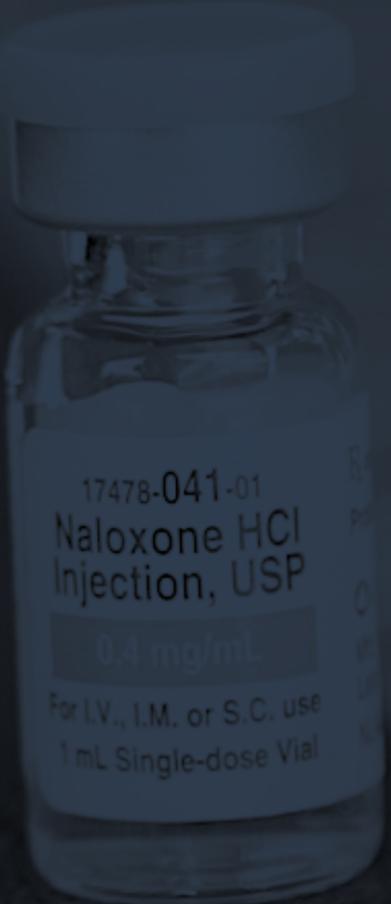
Fentanyl is more than a buzzword. It's a pervasive plague to our community. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 84% of teen overdose deaths in 2021 involved fentanyl. The CDC estimates 150 people die every day from overdoses related to synthetic opioids like fentanyl.

The numbers are staggering, and the stories will cut you to the core. Drug dealers lace drugs with fentanyl because it's cheaper and more addictive. They do not care about human life.

State Attorney Melissa Nelson

Our first responders and investigators are discovering drugs — ranging from marijuana to heroin — cut with fentanyl, and users often are not aware of what they actually are taking.

As the nation sees a rise in overdoses and deaths by both addicts and first-time drug users, the SAO4 aims to warn the community that no street drug is safe for use.



SCAN HERE
to watch "On High Alert"



PART 1: "Don't be stupid"

In this emotional sit-down interview, Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department's Capt. Eric Prosswimmer revealed he lost a close friend to opioids. He dives deeper into the growing issue of fentanyl on Jacksonville's streets.

PART 2: "The Ones Who Are Left Behind"

Pat Brantley shares her heartbreaking story of finding her daughter, Leigh, lifeless in bed. Leigh died of an accidental fentanyl overdose. The drug dealer was prosecuted for her death and sentenced to 30 years in prison.

PART 3: "Happy Birthday"

Lt. Jamie Jordan (left) details the moments he brings people back to life after their brushes with fentanyl.

PART 4: "I'd Rather Die Than Live This Way"

We sit down with two women in recovery who unravel their struggles with opioids, and how one woman overdosed multiple times on fentanyl before realizing she needed to get clean before this drug killed her.

PART 5: "They Are Killing Our Kids"

Mother Carroll Miniard alongside State Attorney Melissa Nelson, Sheriff T. K. Waters, and Mayor Donna Deegan read Miniard's victim impact statement she read to the court when her son's drug dealer was sentenced. Her son Evan died of an accidental fentanyl overdose.

We hope these stories — from people whose loved ones have died, first responders who have saved lives, and recovering addicts who have almost died themselves — will prevent another life lost. *State Attorney Melissa Nelson*



AGGRESSIVE PROSECUTIONS

COMBATTING Crimes of Violence

Years before Marquez Johnson, Rashad Johnson, and Feon Davis were convicted for trafficking drugs from a home on the Eastside of Jacksonville, Assistant State Attorney Lauren Anderson knew their names. Their cases, like many in Targeted Prosecution, were years in the making.

Anderson is a member of the office's Targeted Prosecution Unit, where assistant state attorneys are focused on monitoring and tracking gang activity in Jacksonville. They research the hierarchy of gangs and decipher the relationships within the criminal enterprises and amongst rival groups. It's part of their wider strategy to combat violent crime in our community.

That's how targeted prosecution works and why it exists — to target our city's violent criminals.

Anderson and ASA Tom Mangan were involved in the Johnson, Johnson, and Davis cases from investigation to conviction. Anderson was on scene during the SWAT call to the house where they sold drugs and during their subsequent arrests. Then, Anderson and Mangan spent eight months combing through cell phone data to construct the case.

Davis pleaded guilty to the court and the Honorable Anthony Salem

sentenced him to 12 years in prison. The Johnson brothers went to trial and a jury found them guilty of all charges. They were sentenced to 30 years in Florida State Prison.

"Do gangs drive the violence?" then-Chief Assistant State Attorney L. E. Hutton asked. *"Absolutely they do. You hear the Sheriff; you hear the State Attorney talk about it again and again. There's a small group of people who are driving most of the violence."*

These three men are inextricably linked to a dangerous gang in Jacksonville. The Targeted Prosecution team continues to destabilize criminal groups.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Lauren Anderson and Tom Mangan.



Brothers Marquez and Rashad Johnson in court.

Gang violence is one of the most prominent threats to public safety. Gangs are recruiting younger members, so the issue is perpetuating. *State Attorney Melissa Nelson*



YouTube KSHORDY - "LETS DO IT" (Official Video)

Jacksonville rapper Kshordy gets 12 years in prison for gun charge First Coast News



One of Jacksonville's "drill" rappers — who sings of money, drugs, murder, and retribution — was himself caught in the act after an August 2020 shootout in the Northwest part of town.

Police were called to a shooting at a convenience store. Officers found Terise Powe, known as Kshordy, in an empty field having been shot in the leg. He was transported to the hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

Officers found his AR-15 rifle and magazine as well as shell casings all within 100 yards of Kshordy's injured body. His DNA positively matched the DNA on the rifle and the magazine. He was previously convicted in 2017 of violent felony charges that made it illegal for him to possess a firearm.

In March, it took a jury only 30 minutes to find Powe guilty of being a gang-related felon in possession of a firearm. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison by the Honorable Anthony Salem.

Powe also is facing Second-Degree Murder and other charges in a separate case scheduled to go to trial in 2024.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorney Leah Owens.



Prosecutors successfully argued it was a confession.



A clip from one of Kshordy's online music videos.



IN THE COURTROOM



2023 Notable Cases

In Memoriam

Their lives were taken senselessly and cruelly in Jacksonville on August 26, 2023. The 21-year-old gunman was fueled by racist hate and an extremist ideology. The gunman took his own life following the attack after leaving a hate-filled manifesto. The State Attorney's Office condemns racism and violence.

I cannot stop thinking about the innocent victims who were all going about a normal Saturday when they came face to face with terror. I cannot stop thinking about their families who must now live knowing their loved one was murdered for no other reason than the color of their skin. *State Attorney Melissa Nelson*



Angela Michelle Carr, 52



Jerrald Gallion, 29



Anolt Joseph "AJ" Laguerre Jr., 19



This remains one of the most shocking and evil crimes our community has ever suffered — cold, calculated, premeditated, heinous, atrocious, cruel. Despite the passage of time, law enforcement and the prosecution, led by Alan Mizrahi, have remained steadfast in their commitment to this case and to the friends and family of Reggie and Carol Sumner.

State Attorney Melissa Nelson

BURIED ALIVE

Duval County jury votes for **death sentence** in 'buried alive' case First Coast News

Following a change in the law relating to death penalty procedures, three co-defendants returned to the courtroom for new penalty phases, 18 years after their crimes. On May 24, 2023, a Duval County jury recommended death for Michael Jackson in the murders of Reggie and Carol Sumner. Jackson was convicted in 2007 of two counts of First-Degree Murder, Robbery, and Kidnapping. He was the mastermind behind the cruel plot to kill the couple and steal their life savings. Juries handed down life sentences for co-defendants Tiffany Cole and Alan Wade.

In 2005, the defendants kidnapped the Sumners from their Jacksonville home, placed them in the trunk of Reggie



Sumner's car, drove them to an isolated wooded area in Georgia, got their passcodes for various bank accounts, and then buried them alive in a pre-dug grave to eliminate them as witnesses.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Alan Mizrahi, Jay Plotkin, and Joel Cooper.



Ex-boyfriend sentenced to **30 years in prison** for slaying of Jacksonville sailor

Andrea Washington was a member of the U.S. Navy, and a mother of three. She filed a restraining order against her ex-boyfriend, Danny Beard.

Eleven days later on Sept. 17, 2018, she was found shot to death in her Northside home.

Beard was arrested for the crime and ultimately pleaded guilty to Washington's murder. He was sentenced by the Honorable Mark Borello to 30 years in prison.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Naval Criminal Investigative Service and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Dan Skinner and Cameron French.

As sailors, we are trained and prepared for losing our shipmates due to illness, injury and even suicide, but in my 30 years of service, I was never prepared for the call I received on the night of Sept. 16, 2018. *Teri Zehnacker, Washington's colleague*

2023 Notable Cases cont.



Killer in brutal Orange Park murder gets **life in prison**

In a horrific case that came back to the office on appeal, a jury once again convicted Michael R. Jackson of First-Degree Murder and Sexual Battery in the 2007 killing of 25-year-old Andrea Boyer. Jackson was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

On the morning of Jan. 23, 2007, the Clay County Sheriff's Office responded to a veterinary clinic on Wells Road after an employee found Boyer dead inside the clinic. Boyer had been sexually assaulted and murdered. Jackson's DNA was found on Boyer's body.

Boyer's niece, Kayli Latner, told the court that Boyer was like a second mother to her.

Assistant State Attorneys Dan Skinner, Pam Hazel, and Ashley Terry worked tirelessly on this case, which shook the small community for a second time. The case was investigated by the Clay County Sheriff's Office and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

—
I won't be able to hear her say she's proud of me. She won't be able to see how I have grown into the woman I am today, and I won't be able to tell her all my life experiences. Her laugh is gone, her smile, her warming presence, all gone and all a blurry memory. *Kayli Latner, Boyer's niece*

Jacksonville fence company owner sentenced to a **year in jail** for fraud

News4Jax

Investigative reporting by News4Jax led to a yearlong jail sentence for a Jacksonville business owner. In June 2022, customers of Father & Sons Fence Co. reached out to reporter Tarik Minor for help after numerous customers signed contracts and paid deposits to have fences built, but then no work was done. By August 2022, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office arrested the owner of the company, Glen Northrup.

First Assistant Stephen Siegel prosecuted the case. The investigation revealed the 20-year-old business was failing, and, instead of closing up shop, Northrup continued to take money from customers to install fences on their properties with the promise that work would get done.

The fraud occurred between January and April 2022, with more than 25 customers falling victim to the scheme.

In September 2023, just over a year after the initial news reports, Northrup pleaded guilty to Organized Fraud and was ordered by Judge Tatiana Salvador to pay \$55,306 in restitution to the victims.

With the alerting by journalists at News4Jax, this case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office.

Uncle gets **life in prison** for pregnant niece's murder

First Coast News



Four and a half years after 16-year-old Iyana Sawyer was last seen, a jury convicted her uncle by marriage of two counts of First-Degree Murder and Sexual Battery. Sawyer was five months pregnant when she and her unborn daughter Hazel were murdered.

The investigative work by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and Assistant State Attorneys Cameron French and Dan Skinner revealed that Quiles impregnated his underage niece and then murdered her so people would not discover he was the baby's father.

On Dec. 19, 2018, Sawyer's family reported her missing. She was last seen leaving Terry Parker High School. Quiles lured Sawyer to his work under the pretense they would run away together. He then shot and killed her and placed her body in a dumpster, which was emptied at a landfill. The landfill was searched extensively, but her body was never recovered.

Quiles confessed the crime to his brother, who called the police weeks after Sawyer was reported missing.

The Honorable Anthony Salem sentenced Quiles to life in prison.



—
I just can't understand how someone who was loved and caring like herself can be thrown away as if they were trash, as if they meant absolutely nothing to anyone.
Iyana was loved; Hazel was loved.

Iyana Sawyer's sister

Illegal alien sentenced to **60 years in prison** for fatal stabbing



On March 3, 2023, Yery Noel Medina Ulloa pleaded guilty and was sentenced for the murder of Francisco Javier Cuellar, who had taken Medina Ulloa in and helped him get on his feet in America.

Medina Ulloa will now spend the next 60 years in Florida State Prison.

On Oct. 7, 2021, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office responded to an Arlington neighborhood and found Medina Ulloa covered in blood. Inside, officers found Cuellar dead.

This case grabbed national attention when the investigation revealed Medina Ulloa was in the United States illegally, having given authorities at the U.S.-Mexico border a false name, date of birth, and claimed to be a juvenile.

The investigation was led by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorney Tom Mangan.

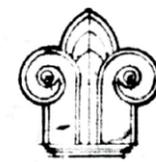
—
My dad seemed like he was doing a favor for somebody because where [Ulloa] came from they are super poor. My dad was really compassionate like that; he would help someone who needed it.

Cuellar's daughter to the New York Post



STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR FLORIDA'S FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

The Ed Austin Building: A Storied History



Originally the federal building constructed and pictured in the 1930s, the Ed Austin Building now houses the Duval County office of the State Attorney's Office.

Ninety years ago, Wiley Post became the first person to fly solo around the world, construction began on the Golden Gate Bridge, Prohibition was repealed, and the first Dust Bowl storms began. The Great Depression was well underway, and Franklin D. Roosevelt was sworn in as the 32nd president. In Jacksonville, Florida, the same year, work was completed on a new federal building that would serve a long and noteworthy role in Northeast Florida history: the Jacksonville U.S. Post Office and Courthouse.



Designed by revered architect James W. Wetmore and firm Marsh & Saxelby, the building was slated to be a thing of federal beauty. In 1931, an article announced that plans for the new federal building had been approved, one headline noting "Jacksonville's Government Plant Will Be Unlike Any Existing Building." Construction was swift. By December 1933, the Jacksonville U.S. Post Office and Courthouse building was ready for work.

The building served for nearly 70 years and housed almost every local office in the U.S. government. Represented within its walls were the U.S. Post Office, Marshals, Secret Service, the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, and the District Court, among other federal offices.

In 2003, the post office moved to its new headquarters and the federal court moved next door to the new federal courthouse. Ownership of the building was transferred to the City of Jacksonville. Under Mayor John Peyton, the building was renovated as office space for the State Attorney's Office. In 2014, Jacksonville's City Council renamed the building for former mayor and state attorney T. Edward "Ed" Austin, Jr. After extensive remediation and renovation, employees of the State Attorney's Office moved into the Ed Austin Building in February 2015.

Now, 90 years later, the SAO4 is preserving and honoring the building's past.



FUN FACT: The building's historic blueprints are actually blue — but why? The process of transferring an image to a new page is called cyanotype, and originates in photography. A chemical combination, known as Prussian blue, is a photosensitive solution that was used to reproduce images or documents. The process was abandoned in the 1960s with the popularization of new technology, like Xerox copies.

Notable History in the Ed Austin Building



Above: Judge Bryan Simpson's courtroom where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. testified in 1964.



The Honorable Gerald Bard Tjoflat during a visit last year on the bench in Courtroom No. 1, where he presided over cases from 1971 to 1975.



In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled segregation in education was unconstitutional. *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (U.S. 1954). Florida, like other states, was slow to integrate. In 1963, U.S. District Judge Bryan Simpson approved a plan that provided integration of one grade per year. But the school district was not cooperative.

By 1965, only 60 Black schoolchildren out of 30,000 were attending integrated schools in Jacksonville.

Mims v. Duval County School Board

In 1971, the United States Supreme Court, frustrated by the lack of progress in school integration, ordered school districts to “do it now.”

The Honorable Gerald Bard Tjoflat was a newly appointed U.S. District Court Judge and his first order of business was to desegregate Duval County public schools — the 13th largest school district in the country — delivered in *Mims v. Duval County School Board*. Judge Tjoflat drove to every school in the county to meet with faculty, students, and administrators, Black and white, and held days of public hearings on the plan. As a direct result of Judge Tjoflat’s decisive judicial leadership and the community’s cooperation, desegregation was achieved peacefully in Jacksonville, unlike in some cities across the country.

Scan the QR code to read “The Last Unlikely Hero: Gerald Bard Tjoflat and The Jacksonville Desegregation Crisis 35 Years Later”



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In the spring of 1964, as St. Augustine prepared to celebrate its 400th anniversary, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference launched a massive campaign to end racial discrimination in the oldest European city in the nation through sit-ins and marches.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gives a young protester a pat on the back as a group of youngsters started to picket St. Augustine on June 10, 1964. *The Associated Press*

On June 11, Dr. King and other demonstrators attempted to eat at the Monson Motor Lodge on St. Augustine’s waterfront. The manager refused to serve them and asked Dr. King to leave. Dr. King refused and was arrested; he was taken to the St. John’s County Jail. Due to threats to his life, Dr. King was moved to the Duval County jail. On June 13, Dr. King testified before U.S. District Court Judge Bryan Simpson in the federal courthouse. Judge Simpson’s decision allowed Dr. King to march in St. Augustine and city officials could not interfere with the march. Two weeks later, on July 2, 1964, the Civil Rights Act was signed into law.

Judge Simpson’s courtroom has been carefully restored to its federal splendor. The witness box where Dr. King testified still exists.

Judge Bryan Simpson also made other landmark decisions on desegregation in the matter of the St. Augustine marches. He also ordered the desegregation of public schools in Jacksonville, Orlando, and Daytona Beach, and of city pools and golf courses in Jacksonville.

The basic purpose for our being in St. Augustine is to assist our local affiliate, the Augustine — St. Augustine Chapter of the SCLC to solve the problem which exists in the community, namely the problem of segregation and discrimination that the Negro citizens of that community still face. And we are seeking to do that through engaging in nonviolent direct action in order to bring the use out in the open and, at the same time, to appeal to and try — and attempt to arouse the conscience of the community and the nation over the injustices and the indignities that Negroes continue to face in the oldest city in our nation.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. testimony before Judge Bryan Simpson, Saturday, June 13, 1964, in the former federal building, now SAO4.



United States v. Carlos Lehder-Rivas

Pablo Escobar is one of the most well-known drug lords in the world. Escobar and Carlos Lehder founded the Medellín Cartel and revolutionized drug smuggling in the 1970s.

Lehder used small planes, able to fly at low altitude to avoid detection, to bring tons of cocaine into the United States through Miami. Escobar and Lehder made billions of dollars and, during their prime, were responsible for smuggling the bulk of all cocaine into the U.S. Lehder evaded authorities for years, and threatened to kill federal judges if he was ever captured.

He was eventually arrested and extradited from Colombia to Jacksonville to stand trial.

During his eight-month trial in 1988, heavily armed U.S. Marshals and SWAT teams guarded the courthouse. Lehder was housed in a special cell inside the courthouse — rather than the jail — to reduce the risk of attack by the cartel. His former cell is now the ladies’ restroom on the building’s fifth floor.

Lehder was convicted and sentenced to life in prison plus 135 years, but later testified against Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Noriega in exchange for a reduction to his sentence. He was released from prison in 2020 at the age of 70.



The former Carlos “Crazy Charlie” Lehder-Rivas barred holding cell on the fifth floor of the SAO building.

Pablo Escobar died Dec. 2, 1993, in a hail of gunfire while trying to escape Colombian special forces in Medellín, Colombia.





L.E. Hutton was sworn in with his wife, Kathleen, by his side.

Swearing in one of our own: Judge L. E. Hutton

In a bittersweet but well-deserved departure, Chief Assistant State Attorney L. E. Hutton was appointed to the Fourth Judicial Circuit bench in late December by Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Following the announcement, State Attorney Melissa Nelson said Hutton had *“proven himself as a talented prosecutor with exceptional intellect and work ethic”* and would be a valuable asset to the judiciary. Hutton said he was appreciative of the opportunity and the trust the governor placed in him. Hutton rejoined the State Attorney’s Office in 2017 as chief assistant after a successful 16 years in private practice. In this important role, he oversaw operations in the Clay, Duval, and Nassau county offices; served as a member of the office’s homicide unit; managed the Grand Jury Indictment Review

Panel; and worked alongside the office’s Targeted Prosecution unit to combat gang violence. He began his legal career with the office in 1998 and served until joining the law firm of Willis, Ferebee & Hutton in 2001. Hutton was sworn into his new role the first week of January 2024, surrounded by an audience of family, friends, and colleagues from both the State Attorney’s Office and the judiciary.



...a talented prosecutor with exceptional intellect and work ethic.

An Honorable Walk

In 2023, the SAO4 completed its Law Enforcement Corridor on the first floor of the Duval County office.

For years, we gathered photos — current and historical — of our area law enforcement partners and first responders in action. This hallway is well-traveled by police officers and investigators, and with these photos, the office shows our appreciation for their hard work and history every day.

Scan the QR code to watch the video showcasing the Law Enforcement Corridor. Prints sponsored by Stellar.





TRAINING & EDUCATION

Staying on Top of Our Game

Over the past year, our prosecutors and investigators received training from experts in various legal topics.




War Story Wednesday

The “War Story Wednesday” series showcases our trial attorneys and their cases, and inspires our lawyers. Prosecutors share their interesting and high-profile cases in an informal lunch-and-learn setting.

Targeted Prosecution ASAs Lauren Anderson, Trey Atkinson, and Leah Owens discussed their video prosecutions of convicted felons who flagrantly show off guns, rifles, and drum magazines in their music videos. These successful prosecutions are changing the behavior of gang members.

Homicide prosecutors Alan Mizrahi and Jay Plotkin (pictured above and left top) discussed the case and trial of the *State of Florida v. Michael Jackson, et al.* Defendants kidnapped, robbed, and buried an elderly couple alive to steal money from their ATM and to eliminate them as witnesses. (See more on page 9).



Welcome Back

Former Assistant State Attorney and future Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives Sam Garrison spoke with our prosecutors about his decade at the SAO4 and service in the House of Representatives.

Rep. Garrison is also the 2003 SAO4 Rookie of the Year (see more on page 33).

New Attorney Training Intensive

The State Attorney’s Office training program, affectionately nicknamed “The Incubator,” is an intensive training that takes newly hired attorneys through all aspects of their role as prosecutors.

The Incubator aims to accomplish three goals in its three weeks:

INSPIRATION | CAMARADERIE | EDUCATION

The program includes court observation, lectures, and hands-on training exercises to help these young lawyers develop their skills, onboard work processes, and understand the mission, vision, and values of the office.

Jury Selection & the “25 Common Mistakes in Voir Dire”



Dr. Melissa Pigott, the co-founder and director of Magnus Research Consultants, gave a jury selection training to our prosecutors (pictured left bottom) on the “25 Common Mistakes in Voir Dire.”

Dr. Pigott is a nationally recognized social psychologist and an expert in the area of jury, litigation, and Alternative Dispute Resolution research. She has selected more than 200 juries and has performed thousands of mock jury studies involving billions of dollars in claims.



TRAINING & EDUCATION (CONTINUED)

UF Compressed Class

For the first time, the SAO4 hosted a compressed class for the University of Florida Levin College of Law preceding the 2023 fall semester.

Over the course of a week in August, students were introduced to trial theories and skills. They received instruction on opening statements as well as direct and cross-examination. In addition to learning about the office's initiatives, they observed a trial, spoke with judges, and participated in an opening statement competition.

With this class, we hope to inspire the next generation of...



FROM COURTROOM TO COMMUNITY



It's nice for everyone to remember that while the academics are important, students who are engaged in the arts become really well-rounded and get to contribute to their community in ways such as this.

Carrie Santa Lucia, the students' art teacher



Student Self-Portraits on Display

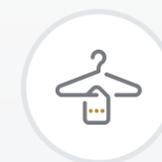
Twelve self-portraits add life to the once-blank walls of the Human Resources department on the fifth floor of our Duval County office. The faces are those of Stanton College Preparatory High School students.

Yvonne Sloan, a member of our Human Resources team, took the creative liberty to liven up the space by reaching out to her daughter, Carrie Santa Lucia, who has been an art teacher for 24 years.



Santa Lucia's students who chose to donate a self-portrait for this project were granted community service hours. She said it was also the first time these young artists were creating something for display, instead of competition.

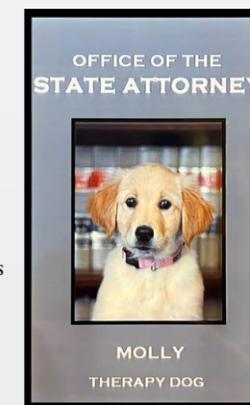
These college-bound teens each put a piece of their unique selves into the artwork, which are now a colorful part of the SAO4.



SVU Service Pup, Molly Grace

The newest — and dare we say fluffiest — addition to the office was born on Aug. 8, 2023. Molly Grace Humphrey is a Golden Retriever working in the Special Victims Unit.

She will begin official therapy dog training in 2024, but her calm demeanor and lovable face have already been of benefit. In her first few months with the office, Molly has already comforted some of our youngest victims.



FROM COURTROOM TO COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)



Jackets for Justice

Our office remains victim-focused and seeks to lessen the burden of the criminal justice system for victims.

In 2023, the SAO4 launched *Jackets for Justice* as another layer of support to help prepare victims for court. The last thing on someone's mind who is recovering from trauma is whether they have the appropriate clothing for the courtroom. Now, we can simply provide it for those who need it.

Victim Advocates Makenzie Rhoden and Zina Jiad, along with Special Victims Unit Supervisor Josie Rodriguez, have worked to build two separate wardrobe closets with garments in a range of sizes and styles. The closets are stocked with donated suits, dresses, shoes, and more.



Cathedral Arts Program on Display

Abstract paintings are hung across the second and fifth floors of our Duval County office. Art is supposed to mean something, and these do. The paintings were created by 12- to 17-year-old boys being held at Jacksonville's Pre-Trial Detention Center awaiting trial.

With the help of the Cathedral Arts Project and instructor Tony Rodrigues, the student artists are learning about creativity, critical thinking, and teamwork among other life skills that can be taught through art. They're also

learning abilities and behaviors to build success in adulthood.

The pieces hanging in the SAO4 are done in the Abstract Expressionism style, which emphasizes reflection on the individual psyche and experience. These lessons help them see a broader view of their world, beyond just their neighborhood, city, or social circles.

This art not only brightens the walls of our building, but quite possibly the futures and growth of these students, too.



Community INVOLVEMENT



1 Jax Bar YLS Chili Cook-Off



The office had a blast cheering on *Team "IT WAS ALWAYS THE JUSTICE"* at the Jacksonville Bar Association Young Lawyers Section's Annual Chili Cook-Off event in February. Playing off of the Jacksonville Jaguars' season success, the office adapted #IWATJ ("it was always the Jags") to celebrate our mission: to pursue justice and to fairly and impartially enforce the law.

2 5000 Role Models

ASAs Marcus Isom and Octavius Holliday kicked the year off by leading a workshop on college, brotherhood, and the legal profession for Darnell Cookman Middle-High School's 5000 Role Models. The 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project is a dropout prevention and mentoring program committed to *guiding minority male students*, providing them with career inspiration and pathing.

3 Literacy Week



In celebration of Florida's Literacy Week, the SAO4 volunteered as *guest readers* at four Duval County Public Schools in January. Elementary Schools Henry F. Kite, S.A. Hull, Garden City, and Crown Point invited our office to meet their bright students and share the magic of reading that has helped us excel in our careers.

4 Clay Law Day

Each May, Law Week is celebrated across the country. The law week and day recognitions, proclaimed by President Eisenhower in 1958, celebrate the justice system and its role in our great democracy. Pictured is our Clay County office celebrating Clay Law Day at the annual luncheon.

5 Donut Day with JSO Mounted Unit



Donut worry about a thing! One Friday in June happened to overlap with National Donut Day, so to celebrate, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Mounted Unit stopped by to help us horse around with equine officers Judge and Duke.

6 Joint Forensics Group

In August, the SAO4 hosted the second quarterly meeting of the Joint Forensics Group, which aims to increase forensic cooperation, communication, and capabilities in law enforcement training and preparation. Thank you to FBI Jacksonville and Orlando for your presentation.



1
2
3
4
5

7 EPIC Outreach Visit

Team SAO4 is on a mission to *bring our attorneys into the community they serve*. Directors, assistant state attorneys, and State Attorney Melissa Nelson got their hands dirty at EPIC Outreach in October. The nonprofit rescue farm works with local law enforcement to save animals in need. While EPIC Outreach rehabilitates and rehomes the animals, our attorneys work on prosecuting the abusers.

8 No Room for Hate

Assistant State Attorney Octavius Holliday joined area law enforcement leaders in a show of unity against hate crimes in our community in November. The event kicked off FBI Jacksonville's renewed awareness and education campaign to combat and prevent such crimes.



9 ALS CEO Soak 2023

In September, State Attorney Melissa Nelson again took part in the annual ALS CEO Soak event to *raise awareness and funds for patient care and research* — a cause near and dear to her. The event was hosted by the ALS Association's Florida Chapter on a warm afternoon perfect for cooling off in an ice bath.



10 The Magic of the Season

Santa Claus came to town and brought the magic of the holiday season — with a little help from our first responders! The office's first Kids Holiday Party turned out to be an afternoon to remember, full of smiles, sweets, and letters to St. Nick.



11 SAO4 Alumni Party

Current and former employees of the SAO4 gathered in December to celebrate the season. The office was transformed into a festive wonderland for the evening.



12 Sandalwood Career Fair

The SAO4 met with students at Sandalwood High School's career fair to talk with the next generation of prosecutors, victim advocates, and investigators.



13 Domestic Violence Awareness Month

The office stood with survivors in honoring the month of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Special Victims Unit Deputy Director Khary Gaynor said it best at the City of Jacksonville's press conference: *"be a shoulder and an ear for victims. And when in need, help them find their voice or even be their voice."*

14 George Washington Carver Elementary Literacy Week

Members of the SAO4 read to students at George Washington Carver Elementary School during the school's literacy week in November, and we're not sure who had more fun: us or the kids!

15 Raines & Ribault High School Future Lawyers & Leaders

Assistant State Attorneys Octavius Holliday, Jalisa Curtis, Jessica Russell, and LaTasha Campbell talked about the history of the Ed Austin Building, the work of the SAO4, and *the power of mentorship* to a group of students from Raines and Ribault High School Future Lawyers and Leaders program in November. The program is held through the Jacksonville Bar Association's Young Lawyers Section and the D. W. Perkins Bar Association.

16 A Brave New Class

Assistant State Attorneys Hector Murcia-Bustos and Jamie Cona visited the Clay County Sheriff's Office newest recruits to *teach future officers* about what happens after an arrest. That includes writing detailed reports, preparing for depositions, and testifying during trial.

17 Congrats Grads

In August, another round of graduates from the Mental Health Offender Program (MHOP) were announced. The success of MHOP is made possible by the hard work and collaboration of court and community leaders like Sulzbacher, the Courts, and Jacksonville City Council President Ron Salem.



Community INVOLVEMENT

18 Helping Victims of Crime Move Forward

When we talk with victims of crime, the SAO4 asks *how we can help outside of the courtroom*. Victim Advocate Makenzie Rhoden met with a family whose loved one was murdered. The family doesn't live locally, and the victim's apartment needed to be cleared on a short deadline. Makenzie called local business Jaguar Moving. The owner sent out a crew free of charge to move items for the family, and the family donated the furniture to Hubbard House. Thank you, Jaguar Moving, for lessening the burden on this family and helping them give back to other victims of crime.



19 Teen Police Academy Mock Trial



In March, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office invited the SAO4 to host a mock trial for its Teen Police Academy students. Our ASAs enjoyed discussing *the importance of their jobs as prosecutors with the students*, as well as trying "The Lion King" case — (*State of Florida v. Scar*) in the death of his brother, Mufasa.



20 Teen Police Academy Visit

In July, we welcomed students in the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Teen Police Academy. It's important for students to *understand the entire criminal justice process*, from arrest to sentencing. The class toured our historic former courthouse, heard from the Honorable London Kite, and watched our prosecutors' closing arguments in a real trial.



21 National Police Week

In May, the Nassau County Sheriff's Office, Clay County Sheriff's Office, and City of Jacksonville Beach Police Department held ceremonies to *honor the lives of fallen peace officers* across the state who died in the line of duty last year.



In 2022, 10 names were added to the list — even one is too many. The SAO4 extends our gratitude for the men and women who risk their lives to protect our community.



22 LinX + NCIS + SAO4

SAO Investigators Thomas Brady and John Sheppard and JSO Det. James Holderfield were having trouble locating a critical witness in a case. Traditional investigative resources had only gotten the team so far. The Law Enforcement Information Exchange (LinX) database, developed by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, *helped identify a lead that allowed them to locate the witness*.



A LinX representative dropped by the SAO to celebrate the success story and congratulate the investigative team by presenting them with a LinX challenge coin.

22



23 CCSO Hammer & Hope

The SAO4 attended the Clay County Sheriff's Office "Hammer and Hope" event in June, an initiative focused on not only getting people off drugs, but also providing them with the *resources they need to get back on the right track*.

24 Meninak Club of Jacksonville

In April, State Attorney Melissa Nelson spoke with the Meninak Club of Jacksonville and other community members about the "State of the State Attorney's Office." She discussed violent crime, the opioid epidemic, and smart justice. She also reported on the importance of recruiting and retaining talented prosecutors.



23



25 Legal Professionals Panel at UF Law

State Attorney Melissa Nelson and ASA Marcus Isom participated in a panel discussion in January, discussing what employers are looking for when hiring law school graduates. The panel talked with UF Law students and answered their questions about the legal profession.

26 Victim Services Tour of NAS Jax

The SAO4 Victim Services Division was invited for a base tour of Naval Air Station Jacksonville, known locally as NAS Jax, in January to learn about its Fleet and Family Services. This agency offers support and services to active-duty military and family members who are survivors of domestic or sexual violence.

26



27 Operation Safety Net

ASA Jalisa Curtis joined Sheriff T. K. Waters and members of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Community Problem Response (CPR) Unit in March to provide an update on our collective efforts to combat violent crime in our community. The recent initiative — part of Operation Safety Net — resulted in the arrests of three adults and a juvenile as well as the seizure of numerous crime guns.

27





2022 OLEO AWARDS

We were honored to once again recognize exemplary service from our law enforcement partners in Clay, Duval, and Nassau counties at our annual Daniel E. Watts Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer (OLEO) awards in April. Partner agencies from across Northeast Florida were recognized for their good work.

The Fourth Circuit Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer awards ceremony is an annual event hosted by the State Attorney's Office, sponsored by Stellar, to recognize exceptional public safety efforts at the local, state, and federal levels.



Civilian Public Safety Award

JFRD Comms Officer Alonda Oates

Investigative Excellence

U.S. Secret Service SA Kacie Collins

JSO Det. April Cobb

U.S. Secret Service Senior SA Scott Gore

JSO Det. Christal Gause

JSO Det. Annastasia Scott

St. Johns SO Sgt. Gene Tolbert

St. Johns SO Det. Cheyenne Kroul

JSO Analyst Emily Raymor

DEA TFO Cristina Rosario

DEA SA Nareman Ebeid

DEA SA Brent Fisher

DEA SA Molly Brown

DEA TFO Meho Custo

FHP Trooper Tariq Tber

NCSO Det. Heather Rojas

JSO Det. Billy Abbott

CCSO Deputy Kourtney Bowles

CCSO Deputy Halston Jones

FBI SA Josh "Tanner" Vittatoe

JSO Det. Jeremy Easterly

ATF Intelligence Research Specialist Lyndsey Butler

JSO Homicide Det. Michael Gibson

Leadership Award

JSO Sgt. Simon Robb

FBI Crimes Against Children and Human Trafficking Taskforce & FBI Jax Community Outreach Program

Citizen & Volunteer Partnership Award

CCSO Vincent Jones

K-9 Valor Award

JSO K9 Huk / Officer Cheth Plaugher

Lifesaving Award

JBPD Patrol Corporal Morris Ingle

NCSO Deputy Philip Hagan

NCIS SA Michelle Ross

CCSO Det. Robert Bassler

Bravery Award

JSO Det. Me'Atia Sanderson

STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR FLORIDA'S FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

Commitment, Honor, & Service



Each year, we recognize our colleagues for their extraordinary efforts. Innovators, advocates, leaders, and quiet champions were acknowledged for their dedication over the years and for their contributions throughout 2022.



2022 SAO4 EMPLOYEE AWARDS

EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR

Teresa Lewis
Lindsay Bledsoe

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Stephen W. Siegel

STATE ATTORNEY'S AWARD

Thomas L. Mangan, V

MISSION VISION VALUES AWARD

Makenzie Rhoden

ROOKIES OF THE YEAR

Jennifer Braunstein
Jalisa Curtis

TRIAL ADVOCACY

Leah Owens

UNSUNG HERO

Joe Licandro

SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT

Hector Murcia-Bustos

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Marcus L. Isom, Jr.

LEADERSHIP

Donna Cornellier

OUTSTANDING INVESTIGATION

David Humphrey

OUTSTANDING TRIAL SUPPORT

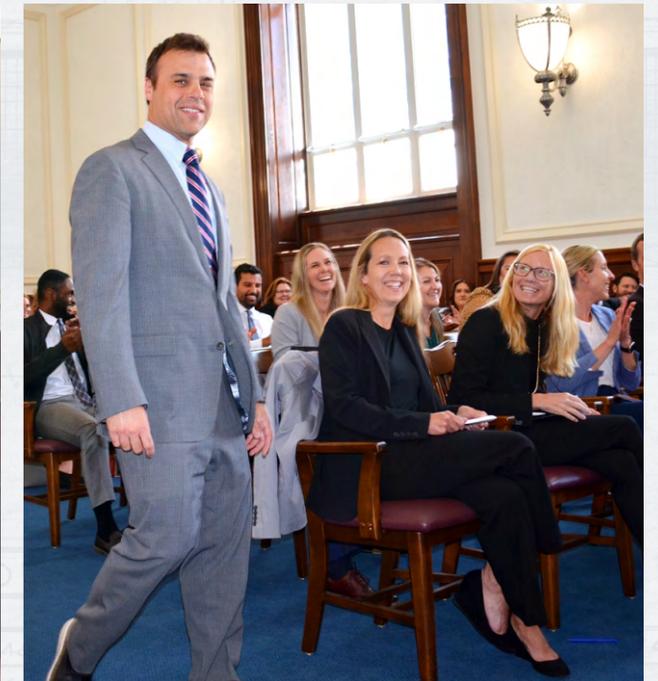
Shirley Cunningham

OUTSTANDING TEAM MEMBERS

Tammy Klaiber
Samantha Youel

GROUP ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

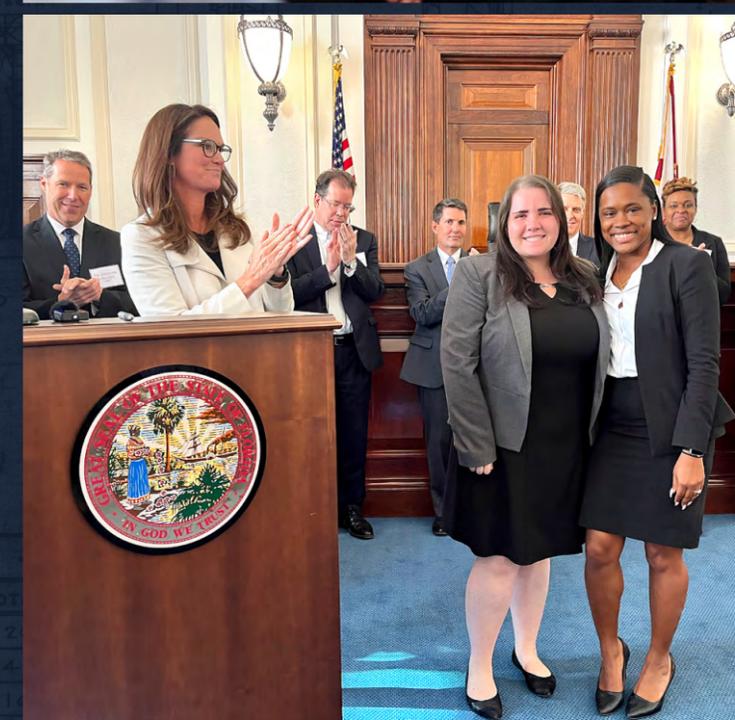
Overdose Prosecution Team,
*State of Florida v. Derrick
Smith*: Lisa Lary, Joe Licandro,
and Annie Maguire





SAO4 Rookies of the Year

- 1991 James Hardee
- 1992 Tad Delegal & Scott Lippman
- 1993 Tom Bishop & Jeri O'Hara
- 1994 John Guy & Shauna Wright
- 1995 Tatiana Radi Salvador
- 1996 Stephen Siegel
- 1997 Sheila Ross
- 1998 Mark Caliel & Dan Skinner
- 1999 Geddes Anderson
- 2000 Angela M. Cox
- 2001 Mose Floyd
- 2002 Rich Mantei
- 2003 Sam Garrison
- 2004 London Mahogany Kite
- 2005 Vanessa Newton
- 2006 Nick Morcom & Didi Wells
- 2007 Adam Urra
- 2008 Lara Mattina
- 2009 Joe Sonson & Alexis Sykes
- 2010 David Thompson
- 2011 Anthony Salem
- 2012 Matt Polimeni
- 2013 Corelyn Crawford Brown & Aaron Feuer
- 2014 Chris Huband & Brett Mereness
- 2015 Lauren Marie Anderson & Cole Sullivan
- 2016 Amanda Parker
- 2017 Christina Stifler
- 2018 Lair Hall
- 2019 Brooke Gasson
- 2020 Alexandra Fischer
- 2021 Sandra Brose & Jamie Cona
- 2022 Jennifer Braunstein & Jalisa Curtis



32

Rookies of the Year Ceremony



In 1991, State Attorney Harry Shorstein and his then-Chief Assistant (now U.S. District Court Judge) Brian Davis created the office's "Rookie of the Year" award. It recognized the young lawyer who demonstrated outstanding skill during their first year as a prosecutor. The tradition has continued, and grown in prestige.

The list of awardees was a mystery until recently. Using anecdotal tips, lots of phone calls, and some successful sleuthing, the office tracked down all of the past rookies over the course of two years. In May, the past winners were honored during a special ceremony. A commemorative plaque was unveiled, listing them all.

Among the illustrious list of names are several judges, a future Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, and dozens of successful attorneys. Announced during the ceremony, 2022 Rookies of the Year Jennifer Braunstein and Jalisa Curtis were added to the long list of distinguished names.

Although special on its own, the event was made even more memorable by the attendance of Shorstein and Davis, who applauded the honorees as those...

...OF EXCELLENT REPUTATION, STATURE,
AND CONTRIBUTION TO THIS COMMUNITY.

It was an historic day celebrating an historic group.

33



2022 SAO4 AWARDS FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

30 YEARS

Robbie Cox
Darlene Drury
Becky Hurtado

25 YEARS

Mark Caliel
Hope Kavalow
Angelique Kelly
Angie Sheppard
Dan Skinner

20 YEARS

Julie Gough
Susan Reinhardt
Josie Rodriguez
John Sheppard
Robin Wallace
Charlie Welch

15 YEARS

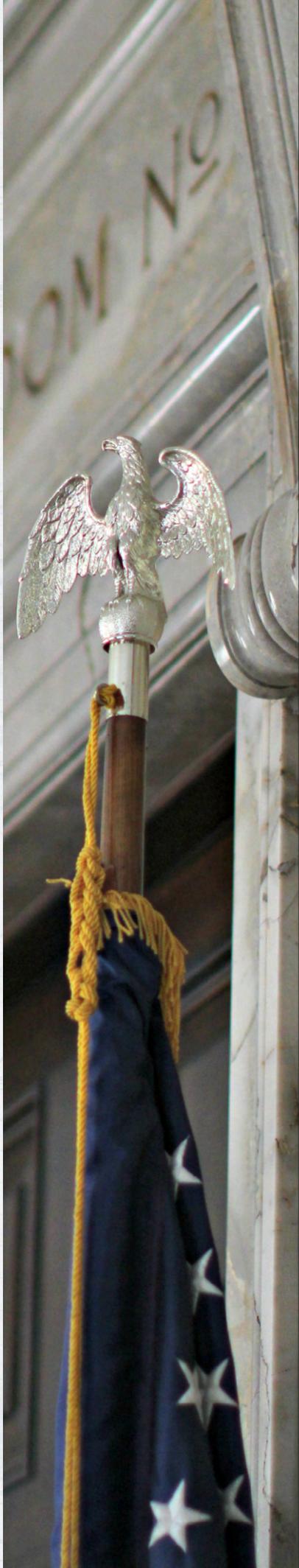
Joel Cooper
Shirley Cunningham
Rich Giglio
Anna Hixon
Octavius Holliday
Joe Licandro
Beth Ann Works

10 YEARS

Dave Bisplinghoff
Paula Bradley
Frances Collins
Ronshita Johnson
Chyna-Michele Makarowski
Leah Owens
Ted (Rudy) Polach
Crystal Shea
Kierra Steele

5 YEARS

Doug Baer
Jaclyn Blair
Ashley Braden-Lavanderos
David Chapman
Rachel England
Joe Farris
Will Grauel
Zina Jiad
Brandy Kowalik
Annie Maguire
Coral Messina
Jim McMillan
Brooke Gasson Milo
LaToya Nelson
Miriam Nelson
Linzee Ott
Lisa Page
Monika Ragsdale
Lawrence Sneed
Nicole Soto
Valery Sutton
Richard Trew
Cynthia Wilber



A Shout Out for Our Employees' Accomplishments



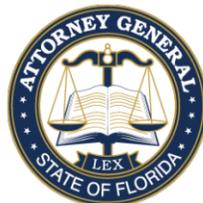
Lewin

VICTIM SPECIALIST RENAE LEWIN
(pictured above)

2023 Distinguished Victim Services Award

In April, Victim Specialist Renae Lewin was honored with Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody's 2023 Distinguished Victim Services Award as part of National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

Lewin is a true pillar of support at the SAO4. An indispensable resource and reliable team member, she works with Nassau County families in cases ranging from juvenile and misdemeanor cases to serious felonies, including murders. She also serves as the office liaison for victim-centered organizations both in Nassau County and Jacksonville, and her efforts were recognized internally when she received the office's 2021 Community Service Award. State Attorney Melissa Nelson traveled to Tallahassee to support Lewin in this recognition.



Youel



VICTIM ADVOCATE SAMANTHA YOEEL

FBI Citizens Academy

Victim Advocate Samantha Youel graduated from the FBI Jacksonville Citizens Academy in May after completing the prestigious six-week course. As a member of their Mass Casualty Task Force, Youel called the experience a "wonderful opportunity" and plans to stay involved.



Employees' Accomplishments cont.



Cona



ASSISTANT STATE ATTORNEY JAMIE CONA

Jacksonville Business Journal Rising Stars

The Jacksonville Business Journal launched a new award program in 2023, one "aimed at discovering and celebrating those who will be making a difference for years to come." Titled "Rising Stars," this program honors those "on the ascent" in their careers. Assistant State Attorney Jamie Cona was chosen as one of the eight inaugural Legal Rising Stars. Cona works tirelessly inside and outside the courthouse to pursue justice and make Clay County a great and safe place to live.



Teen Court

In May, ASA Jamie Cona was awarded the President's Volunteer Service Award during Teen Court's awards banquet in Clay County. Cona was recognized for volunteering more than 150 hours with Teen Court and for her time spent mentoring the teens outside of the program. She is pictured with Teen Court Supervisor Stacey Smith.

To learn more about Clay County's Teen Court program, visit clayclerk.com/teen-court.



Mizrahi



ASSISTANT STATE ATTORNEY ALAN MIZRAHI

Judicial Nominating Commission

Gov. Ron DeSantis appointed Assistant State Attorney Alan Mizrahi to the Judicial Nominating Commission for the Fourth Judicial Circuit. The 28 Judicial Nominating Commissions throughout the state are responsible for presenting the governor with recommendations of qualified individuals whom they believe should be appointed to the bench to fill a judicial vacancy. Mizrahi will serve on the commission through 2026.

Ott



DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY IMPACT LINZEE OTT

Jacksonville Business Journal's 2023 40 Under 40

Director of Community Impact Linzee Ott was selected for the Jacksonville Business Journal's 2023 40 Under 40 award. The list highlights 40 of Northeast Florida's brightest, most promising professionals under the age of 40 for their community involvement and accomplishment in their careers.

Ruth



ASSISTANT STATE ATTORNEY SHAINA RUTH

Leadership Jacksonville Next Generation 2023

Assistant State Attorney Shaina Ruth graduated from the Leadership Jacksonville Next Generation 2023 program. Participants interact with community leaders, network with professionals, go behind the scenes to explore difficult issues facing Northeast Florida, and learn from community successes.

Isom



ASSISTANT STATE ATTORNEY MARCUS ISOM, JR.

Florida Bar 36 Under 36

The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division announced their inaugural class of the 36 Under 36 Professionalism Awards, honoring individuals under the age of 36 "who display the highest standards of professionalism and ethics, whose character and integrity remain unwavering even in the most trying times, and whose dedication to raising the bar in the legal profession is unmatched." Isom was chosen for this distinguished award out of more than 100 nominees.

D. W. Perkins Bar Association

In October, Isom was sworn in as the President of the D. W. Perkins Bar Association. Perkins was one of Florida's first African American lawyers, officially admitted to the Florida Bar in 1914, and in 1915, argued the landmark case before the Florida Supreme Court that allowed African Americans to serve on Florida juries. Today, the Perkins Bar boasts more than 100 attorney members. One of the youngest lawyers to ever lead the prestigious organization, Isom serves in this role for a year.



Wolfson



ASSISTANT STATE ATTORNEY ERIN WOLFSON

The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital

Jacksonville's Wolfson Children's Hospital announced new leadership for its board of directors in September. Assistant State Attorney Erin Wolfson was named its chair, to serve a three-year term. She has served on Wolfson's board since 2018, and on The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital since 2008.

McKenzie



JSO DETECTIVE TOMMY MCKENZIE

JSO's Detective of the Month

JSO Detective Tommy McKenzie, assigned to the SAO4, and has earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues. In August, he was honored as JSO's Detective of the Month. State Attorney Melissa Nelson and Sheriff T. K. Waters supported Det. McKenzie in his accomplishment at JSO's ceremony.





ASSISTANT STATE ATTORNEY CLASS OF 2023

The office welcomed new Assistant State Attorneys in September. They were sworn into the Florida Bar during a ceremony by the Honorable John Guy — a former Assistant State Attorney and 1994 Rookie of the Year — and State Attorney Melissa Nelson delivered their Oath of Attorney.



Honoring Commitments

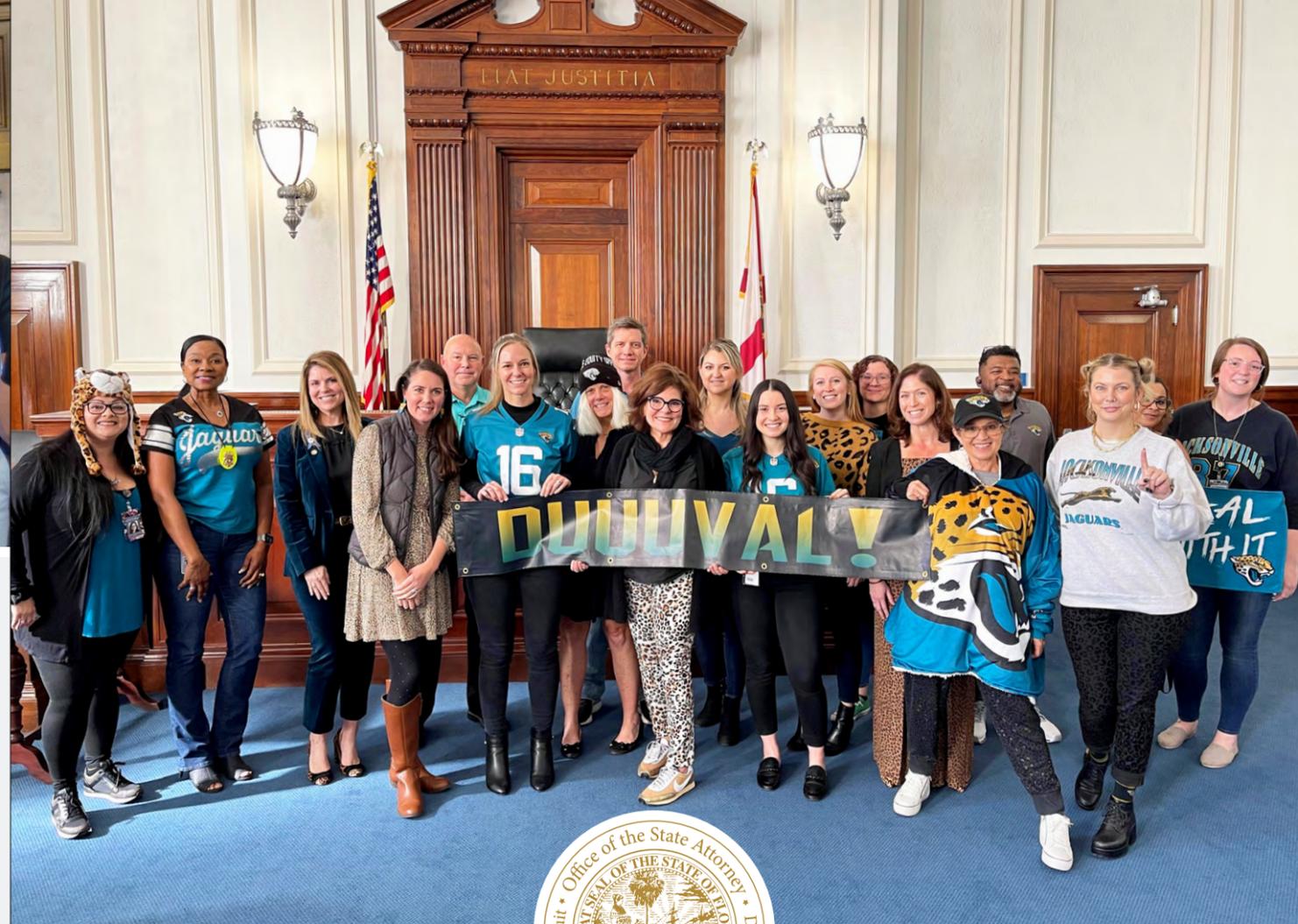
In a special ceremony, State Attorney Melissa Nelson acknowledged the prosecutors who honored their commitment of service to the office. Nelson thanked them for their hard work, demonstrated their success to the incoming class of ASAs, and rewarded them with an exclusive challenge coin commemorating three years of service to the SAO4.



Nearly 40 Interns in 2023

The office hosted spring, summer, and fall interns this year. All three groups attended a meet-and-greet with State Attorney Melissa Nelson, and our summer program had the opportunity to tour JSO's Tactical Warehouse, attend a Q&A session with JSO's K9 Unit, and receive weekly trainings from the office's directors.





STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR FLORIDA'S FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

2023 by the Numbers

To benefit our community, these key programs and initiatives were priorities in 2023.



Juvenile Civil Citations

This program allows youth with no previous criminal history to avoid a criminal record. Instead of an arrest, law enforcement officers can issue a civil citation.

Savings:
\$4+ million*

Civil citations issued to eligible youth:
 • **80%** – SAO4
 • **66%** – Florida Average

Juvenile civil citations issued:
885



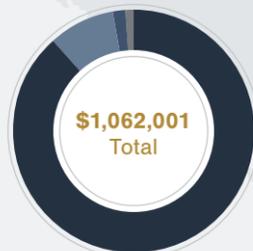
Florida's Fourth Circuit State Attorney's Office serves three counties: Duval, Clay and Nassau



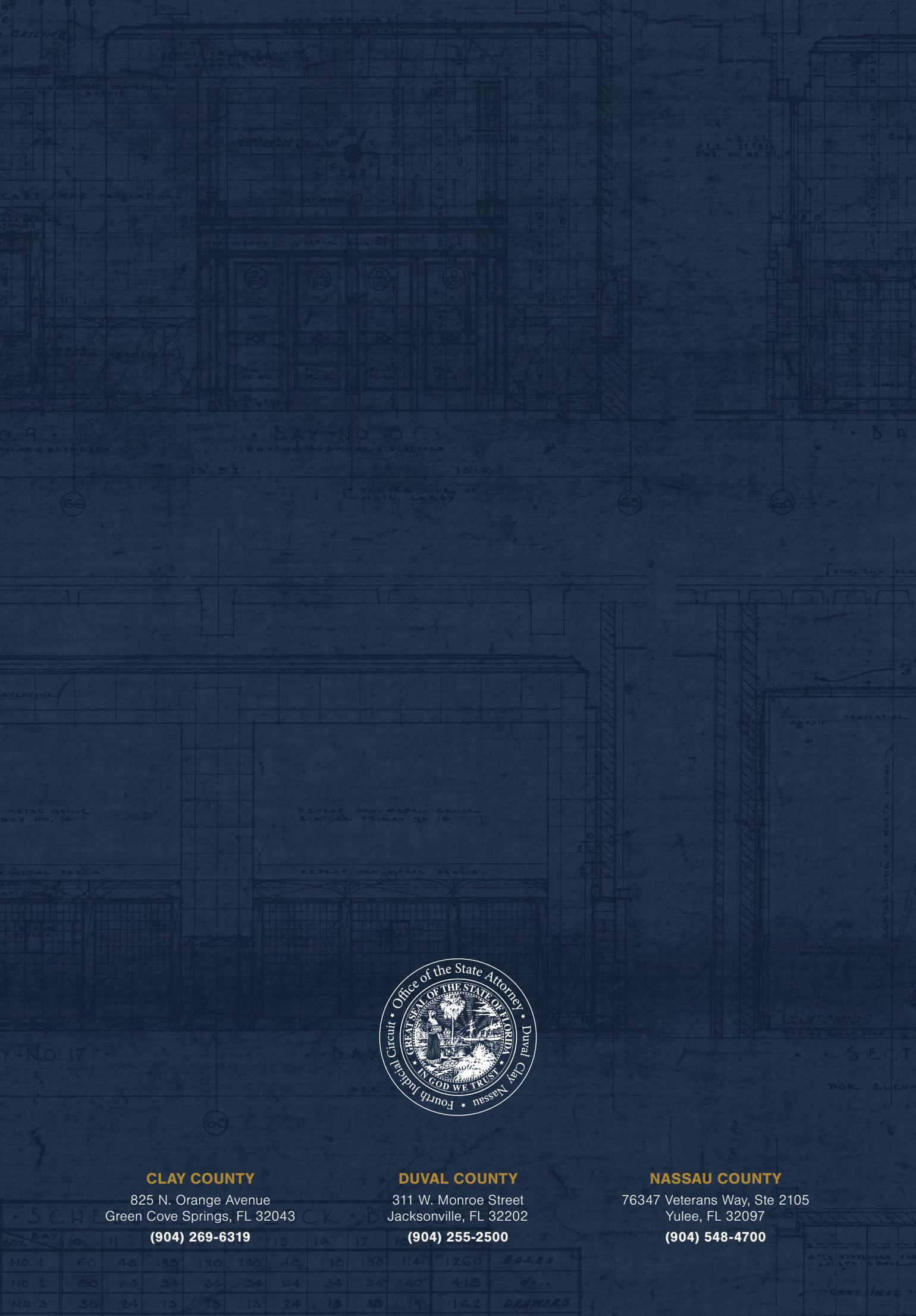
Restitution Enforcement Program

This pre-arrest diversion program gives offenders the opportunity to pay restitution that is returned directly to victims.

Collected for the State of Florida in restitution that goes to victims:



1. The cost to arrest a juvenile is \$5000. The cost to issue a Civil Citation is \$386, saving \$4614 for each juvenile issued a civil citation and not arrested. Florida DJJ Civil Citation Initiative, juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/ckfinder/files/STTAC%20Civi%20CitationWebinar.pdf, September 22, 2014, pg. 27; Florida DJJ Roadmap to System Excellence, www.scribd.com/document/162251091/Florida-Department-of-Juvenile-Justice-Roadmap-to-System-Excellence, August 1, 2013, pg. 32.
 2. Civil Citation & Other Alternatives to Arrest Dashboard (state.fl.us)



CLAY COUNTY

825 N. Orange Avenue
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043

(904) 269-6319

DUVAL COUNTY

311 W. Monroe Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202

(904) 255-2500

NASSAU COUNTY

76347 Veterans Way, Ste 2105
Yulee, FL 32097

(904) 548-4700

NO.	BAY	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
NO. 1	60	43	193	190	110	43	110	190	114	1260	BOLES																																									
NO. 2	60	61	4	34	34	64	34	34	40	410	do.																																									
NO. 3	30	24	13	13	13	24	13	13	13	162	DRAWERS																																									