



State Attorney's Office  
Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida

# 2022 Annual Report

The Florida and U.S. flags standing at attention in the restocked historic Law Library at the State Attorney's Office. See page 20.





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**Melissa W. Nelson**

State Attorney for Florida's  
Fourth Judicial Circuit



## MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY

**Like most accomplished businesses in our community, success requires a plan—and then following through. Or as the saying goes: “plan your work and work your plan.”**

In 2019, we created a three-year strategic plan that established numerous goals in five priorities of public safety, victim and community support, partnerships, office culture, and smart justice. The project was the first of its kind for a state prosecutor's office.

We planned our work in a public manner to hold ourselves accountable and to maintain our commitment to transparency. We then went to work on that plan—and I am proud to tell you that in 2022 we completed the tasks we set out to do at a nearly perfect level.

Those myriad goals ranged from outward-facing projects like the creation of a public data dashboard to internal undertakings such as establishing a Cold Case Initiative focused on homicides and bringing long-awaited answers to the families of murder victims.

This plan and the work to realize it was a collective effort to improve the way we serve and interact with our community.

But we did much more than finish our Strategic Plan in 2022, as you will see in the following pages of this, our sixth Annual Report.

We secured justice for the vulnerable—women, children, our elders—against criminals who exploited a weakness or an opportunity. We incapacitated violent offenders. We took opioid and fentanyl dealers off the streets.

Public safety is not achieved by a sole person, a sole agency, or a sole initiative—it takes the good work of many in a team effort. Or, as we like to say, a #TeamSAO4 effort.

On behalf of the 300-plus attorneys, investigators, and support staff across our three growing counties, I want to thank you for your continued support of our work as we continue to, as our motto states, Pursue Justice Always.

*Melissa*



# 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 fairly and impartially enforce the law.



# Core Guiding Principles

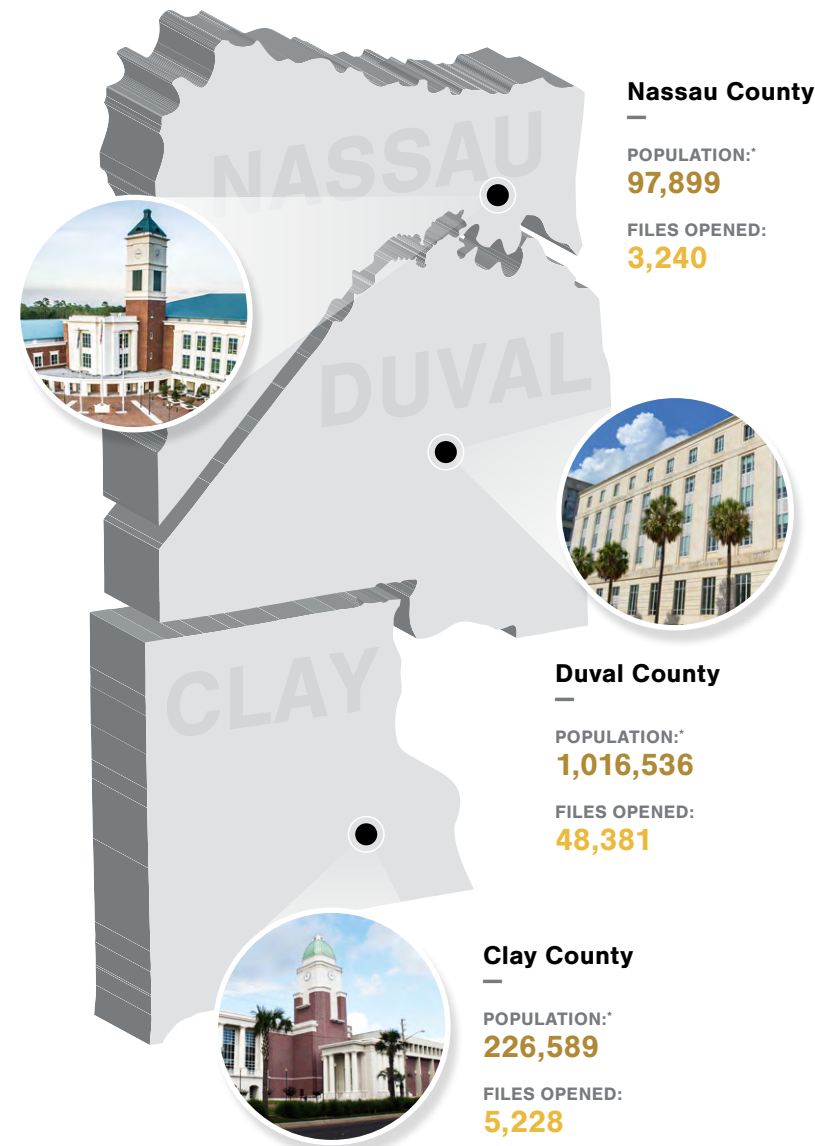
We will:

- 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**

PURSU  
JUSTICE  
ALWAYS

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

# 2022 Office at a Glance



STATE ATTORNEY:  
**Melissa W. Nelson**

TOTAL POPULATION:  
**1,341,024**

TOTAL FILES OPENED:  
**56,849**

TOTAL EMPLOYEES:  
**348**



NUMBER OF PUBLIC RECORDS  
REQUESTS CLOSED:  
**2,065**

BUDGET:  
**\$34 million**

Our duty to the people of Northeast Florida comprises two main tenets. The first is to keep people safe by prosecuting those who disrupt our community. The second is to ensure our pursuit of justice is done in a transparent way that maintains the trust of those we serve.

State Attorney Melissa Nelson



## 2020-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

# 5 Strategic Priorities – 48 Goals

In order to better inform the public of the office's priorities, our leadership conducted a strategic planning process in 2019 that is now complete. That effort resulted in the release of the office's 2020-2022 Strategic Plan—a first for a state prosecutor's office—that helps memorialize what guides our work and how we make our decisions. It included five main priorities, broken into individual projects and thematic goals. The three-year plan was made public as a commitment to accountability and transparency in our decision-making.

**PRIORITY 01:**  
Pursue Public Safety in Clay, Duval, & Nassau Counties

9 GOALS  
8 COMPLETED



**PRIORITY 02:**  
Strengthen Victim Support & Community Trust

8 GOALS  
8 COMPLETED



**PRIORITY 03:**  
Cultivate & Enhance Partnerships with the Office

8 GOALS  
7 COMPLETED



**PRIORITY 04:**  
Foster an Innovative & Efficient Office Culture

12 GOALS  
12 COMPLETED



**PRIORITY 05:**  
Implement Smart Justice Reforms

11 GOALS  
10 COMPLETED



### PRIORITY 4, GOAL 6: Develop Circuit & Juvenile Felony Review Guides & accompanying training modules.

Internal attorney how-to manuals have been published in several major areas of the office's work. *All of these manuals are unique to the Fourth Circuit, and have been viewed as models across the state.*

## COMBATTING VIOLENT CRIME

# National audience, local success: Nelson talks violent crime dip

Violent crime trends expanded in 2021 across the country—but not in Jacksonville. In Duval County, the year-over-year trends showed murders were down 30%, while shootings dropped by 17%.

Given that juxtaposition with peer cities across the U.S., State Attorney Melissa Nelson was asked to share her thoughts on the local efforts and results with FOX News in April.

Nelson told interviewer Dana Perino on "America's Newsroom:"

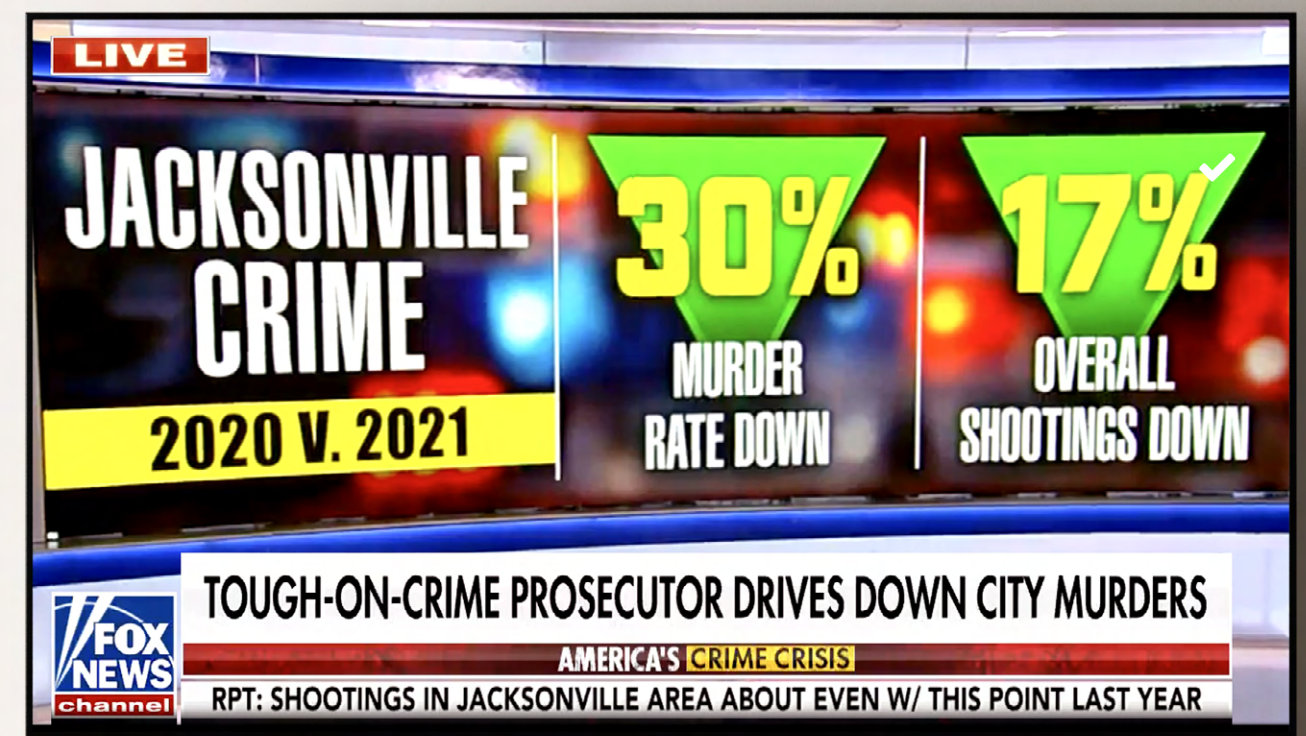
**We are a major metro area and suffer the same challenges as many large cities do, and those are shootings and homicides.**

Nelson discussed law enforcement's efforts to target those responsible for violent gun crime and the steps the office has taken to aid those efforts. Such internal efforts included the creation of the Targeted Prosecution Division and written directives that focus on identifying, targeting, and incapacitating shooters.

Despite the short-term success compared to other jurisdictions, Nelson told FOX the work continues.

Nelson went on to comment that people in the community should take solace in knowing city partners and law enforcement continue to work in unison toward protecting the public.

Nelson appeared on "America's Newsroom" in April 2022 to discuss the city's year-over-year crime trends during the height of the pandemic.





## COMBATTING VIOLENT CRIME

# AGGRESSIVE PROSECUTION

Tyler Jackson guilty of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. *First Coast News*

**Drive-by shootings and retaliatory shootings aimed at rival gang members continue to be a problem in Jacksonville. Targeting, prosecuting, and incapacitating these violent offenders remains a priority of this office.**

We have found success with aggressive prosecution of convicted felons who flagrantly show off guns, rifles, and drum magazines on social media and in music videos. These novel prosecutions work: **we have obtained prison sentences and changed the behavior of gang members as a result.**

These music videos—many of which are professionally produced—glorify drug use and celebrate and threaten murder between rival groups.

Tyler Jackson and Tyler Simmons were arrested as part of a sting called “Operation Rap Up,” which targeted alleged gang members who boasted guns, drugs, and drive-by shootings on their social media channels. Jackson and Simmons were members of Y&R, or, the Young and Ruthless gang, and referred to themselves as the “Murda Twinz.” A song they released called “Murda Twinz” has over 5.3 million views on YouTube.

On April 9, 2020, two passengers in a car allowed the police to look at their cell phones. Police found videos of Simmons, a rapper, who used the name Y&R Slugga Tee, brandishing a rifle without the stock. Investigators learned the videos were taken at Simmons’s home a month prior. A firearms expert reviewed the videos and determined the rifle was a real and genuine firearm. Simmons, a documented gang member who was convicted of a prior felony, was not legally allowed to possess a firearm. For his illegal possession of a gun, he was convicted by a jury and sentenced to seven years in prison.



Y&amp;R Slugga Tee - “Fresh Out” (official music video)

Former Jacksonville Sheriff Mike Williams, flanked by State Attorney Melissa Nelson (left) and Mayor Lenny Curry (right), announced Operation Rap Up, an investigation into violence related to social media, rap videos and gangs. *Dan Scanlan/Florida Times-Union*

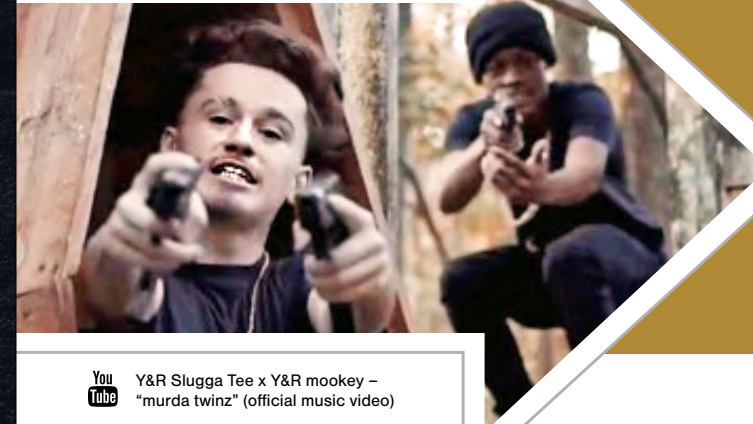


A YouTube video featuring Jackson, a rapper who goes by the name Y&R Mookey, displayed him brandishing various guns. Jackson, a documented member of a street gang, who had previously been adjudicated as a juvenile delinquent, was prohibited from having a gun. Investigation revealed

the video was filmed at a home in Northwest Jacksonville and a firearms expert identified the gun as a genuine Zastava pistol—a modified AK-47-style weapon—which was illegal for Jackson to possess because of his criminal history. He was convicted by a jury and sentenced to 10 years in prison.

During his trial, prosecutors played many of Jackson’s music videos for the jury, and pointed out references to other Jacksonville gangs, threats of violence, and the presence of guns and drugs in each of the videos.

Simmons was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Leah Owens and Trey Atkinson. Jackson was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Leah Owens and Tom Mangan. Both cases were investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office.



Y&amp;R Slugga Tee x Y&amp;R mookey - “murda twinz” (official music video)



**I’ve watched the music videos, and I have to say, I’m appalled at the content of them, but one thing really sticks out: Mr. Jackson is a talented young man who could do anything he wanted with his life if he made the right choices.** *Judge Meredith Charbula*



THE OPIOID CRISIS

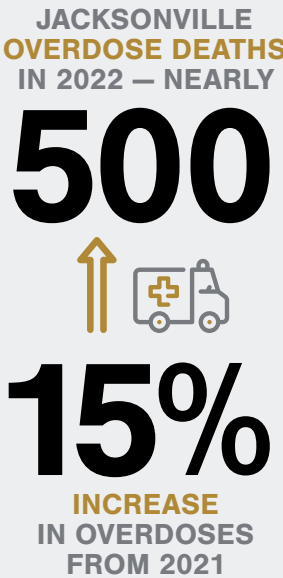
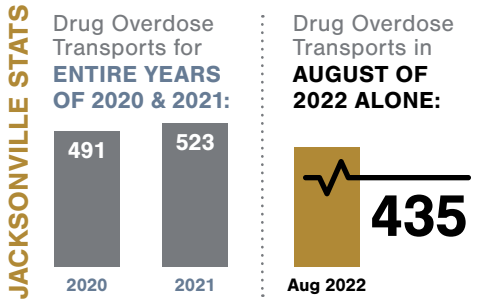
# Holding Drug Dealers Accountable

As the opioid epidemic continues to plague communities across the country, we remain steadfast in our commitment to hold drug dealers accountable for the deaths they cause.

State Attorney Melissa Nelson

According to the CDC, more than 93,000 people died of a drug overdose in the U.S. in 2020, an almost 30% increase from 2019; and between January and August 2022, there were more than 73,000 deaths. Florida ranks second in the nation for overdose deaths, behind only California.

Duval County has also seen a surge in overdose deaths. According to the Jacksonville Fire Rescue Department (JFRD), opioid-related overdoses rose from 16 incidents in January 2015 to 336 in May 2021—a 2,000% increase. In 2022, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office says it responded to nearly 500 overdose deaths, a 15% increase just from 2021.



Since 2019, in an effort to stem the wave of overdose deaths, the SAO and its law enforcement partners have been aggressively prosecuting suspected dealers in overdose deaths. JSO created its "Overdose Squad," whose mission is to take dealers off the streets. The SAO has filed manslaughter charges in 50 cases, and so far, has obtained 26 convictions, with sentences ranging from five to 30 years.



What is Fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid up to **50 TIMES STRONGER THAN HEROIN, AND 100 TIMES STRONGER THAN MORPHINE.** Powdered fentanyl looks just like many other drugs. It's commonly mixed with heroin, cocaine, or methamphetamine, which can be made into pills that resemble other prescription opioids. Often, these counterfeit pills are even stamped with lookalike manufacturer's marks, which makes spotting fakes more difficult.

**JUST 2 MG OF FENTANYL CAN BE FATAL** and it's nearly impossible to tell if drugs have been laced with fentanyl. Unless a consumer receives a prescription directly from a pharmacy, pills shouldn't be trusted, even if they look legitimate. Drugs may contain deadly levels of fentanyl, and you wouldn't be able to see it, taste it, or smell it.

For more information, go to Fentanyl Facts at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).



**69**  
SECURED CONVICTIONS

**26**  
HOMICIDE RELATED CONVICTIONS

**68**  
PENDING CASES

Fentanyl does not discriminate.



Leigh Brantley

Overdose deaths occur in every neighborhood of the Fourth Circuit, affecting all categories of people.

Leigh Brantley died of overdose in her home in May 2021. With permission, the Overdose Squad went through her phone and found texts from

Derrick Smith offering her drugs. Hours after she said she was on her way to meet him, she was dead.

Smith was charged with her death. A jury convicted him, and he was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

John Nevarez was a known drug dealer; undercover JSO detectives saw him sell drugs, then arrested him. In his briefcase, they found more than \$45,000 worth of methamphetamine (over 2,400 grams) and \$30,000 worth of fentanyl (about 260 grams). The fentanyl was in both powder and pill form—the powder made to look like cocaine, and the pills like oxycodone—making the fentanyl even more dangerous. A jury convicted Nevarez and he was sentenced to 30 years.

Rayshawn Green sold drugs to Jacob Millette. Millette believed he was buying cocaine but died from a fentanyl overdose. Green pled guilty and was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

Drug dealer Alberto Rosario sold purple fentanyl to Miguel Pena, who gave some of his drugs to his 18-year-old girlfriend Haller Cesery-Taylor.



Haller Cesery-Taylor

Both Pena and Cesery-Taylor took the drugs. Pena survived, but his girlfriend did not.

Rosario sold fentanyl to tattoo artist Thomas Robbins, who in turn gave drugs to Justin Sikes. Sikes died from a fentanyl overdose. Robbins was sent to prison for three years. In October 2022, Rosario pled guilty to two counts of manslaughter for the deaths of Cesery-Taylor and Sikes, and was sentenced to 20 years in prison followed by 10 years of probation.

These cases were investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Joe Licandro and Annie Maguire.

We have to target these individuals feeding this poison to the citizens of this community. The numbers are staggering. We've had a day where an investigator responded to seven narcotics-related overdose deaths.

Assistant Chief Edwin Cayenne, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office

While JSO was looking to arrest Martell Palmer for Attempted Murder, detectives observed him selling drugs from a home. Officers obtained a search warrant and found 100 grams of fentanyl, 420 grams of methamphetamine, 163 grams of cocaine, and 4.12 pounds of marijuana. A jury convicted Palmer of drug trafficking, and he was sentenced to 40 years as a Habitual Offender.

Palmer's case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Annie Maguire and Will Grauel.

If you are dealing drugs or involved in the drug trade in any way, shape, or form in Clay County, WE are coming for you. I PROMISE you, every member of the Clay County Sheriff's Office will continue working hard every day to keep drugs off of Clay County streets.

Clay County Sheriff Michelle Cook after shutting down a statewide fentanyl trafficking operation





# 2022 NOTABLE CASES

## COLD CASE SOLVED: Former youth pastor sentenced to life in prison for 1994 murder of teen

News4Jax

After deliberating less than three hours, a Jacksonville jury found Ronnie Hyde guilty of the 1994 murder of 16-year-old Fred Laster. Hyde was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

In 1994, dismembered male remains were found behind a dumpster at a gas station in Columbia County, FL. Inside the dumpster, law enforcement found evidence connected to the murder. The evidence was collected and preserved. But it took decades before law enforcement learned the identity of the victim and his killer.

Fred Laster's family never stopped looking for him. In 2014, Laster's sister saw a flyer from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's website and contacted the Columbia County Sheriff's Office wondering if the remains they had found in 1994 might be her brother Fred. The Laster siblings submitted DNA samples, and they matched the evidence collected at the crime scene. Two decades later, they finally found Fred. The siblings told law enforcement that Hyde, a family friend and youth pastor, was the last person seen with their brother in Jacksonville.

As a result of advances in forensic technology, in 2016 Hyde's DNA matched evidence in the dumpster, and he was arrested and charged with the murder of Fred Laster—22 years after the murder.



Fred Laster



**DNA has no bias. It has no agenda, and Hyde's DNA is all over that dumpster.** Prosecutor Alan Mizrahi during his closing argument

Taking the stand in his own defense, Hyde denied murdering and dismembering Laster. He claimed he last saw Laster when he jumped out of Hyde's car and ran to the woods.

The jury rejected Hyde's testimony.

The case was investigated by the Columbia County Sheriff's Office, Jacksonville Beach Police Department, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the FBI. FBI Supervisory Special Agent Abbigail Beccaccio and Columbia County Deputy Jimmy Watson were later recognized at the Fourth Circuit Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer Awards for their investigative efforts on this case. It was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Alan Mizrahi and Terence Martin.

### LASTER FAMILY STATEMENT:

*We never gave up hope. This has been a long, emotional road and we are grateful there is finally justice for Fred. We miss him dearly and miss the future we will never have with him. We would like to thank everyone who over the past 20+ years served a role to secure today's outcome... We love you, Fred.*



First Coast News

## Jacksonville mother sentenced to life in prison in death of 5-year-old daughter

News4Jax

On November 6, 2019, Brianna Williams called the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office to report her 5-year-old daughter, Taylor Rose, missing, and the back door of her Brentwood home unlocked. A massive search effort and investigation ensued, during which Williams became uncooperative and lied about several key timeline facts involving Taylor. The investigation revealed that Williams—days prior to Taylor's disappearance—traveled to a remote area in Alabama, where she briefly stayed before immediately returning to Jacksonville. Taylor's remains were found in the same wooded area to which Williams traveled in Alabama.

Brianna Williams pled guilty and was sentenced to life in prison for the 2019 killing of her daughter.

**This case was emotional for everyone who touched it—for anyone who went to the apartment, the house, to Alabama. The manner in which she died, that she was starved to death, is particularly horrific. It touched our community because it involved a completely innocent child.**

State Attorney Melissa Nelson after the sentencing hearing

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, FBI Jacksonville, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, NCIS, Demopolis Police Department, and Alabama State Bureau of Investigation, with assistance from the Alabama Department of Health's Center for Health Statistics, and Florida Gulf Coast University. The case was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorney Lauren Anderson.



Remains found in mother's hometown of Alabama six days later on Nov. 12, 2019



Taylor Williams reported missing Nov. 6, 2019 in Jacksonville; JSO & other agencies conduct searches



Jecorian McCray was sentenced to life in prison for orchestrating an execution from jail.

While in pre-trial detention for the 2014 burglary of Joe Brenton's home, McCray ordered his 17-year-old brother, Dakarai Maxwell, to kill Brenton to prevent him from testifying in McCray's upcoming burglary trial. On September 21, 2016, the day Brenton was set to testify, under McCray's orders, Maxwell went to Brenton's home and shot him to death. McCray will spend the rest of life behind bars.

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

# HONORING VICTIMS





This shooting was the result of a dispute between individuals who knew each other and were arguing over \$180. I want to repeat that — \$180. So we lost a child's life yesterday over \$180. We have a family grieving because of \$180. And we have a community that's rocked and outraged over a dispute over \$180.

Former Sheriff Mike Williams

In the days after the shooting, people in the community made a makeshift memorial honoring the little girl.



## Hall sentenced to **life in prison** for 2020 shooting of 5-year-old girl sparked by argument over \$180

News4Jax

Five-year-old Kearria Addison was killed in the crossfire of a gunfight outside a Jacksonville food store. Johnathan Hall was found guilty of her death by a jury and was sentenced to life in prison. Hall's codefendants all pleaded guilty.

Video surveillance from the store showed a car pulling into a parking spot at the food store, then Hall and several others getting out of the car and approaching a man and woman as they exited the store. Hall and his group beat them with an aluminum baseball bat and then chased the man and began shooting at him. Kearria, asleep in her family's car, was struck and killed by one of these bullets.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Cameron French and Katelyn Johnston.

## Man **found guilty** of murdering police officer's daughter day after she sought restraining order

First Coast News

A jury convicted Eric Jackson Jr. of murdering the mother of his children, Nekecheana Phillips, who was also the beloved daughter of a JSO officer. A jury rejected Jackson's insanity defense, and he was sentenced to life without parole.

Jackson hid in Phillips' home. When she arrived home and saw him, she ran outside to get away from him. Jackson confronted her and shot her several times in front of her young children, then fled the scene.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Alan Mizrahi and Phil Bavington.



## Man sentenced to **55 years in prison** for 2017 murder, sexual battery of Keystone Heights woman, neighbor

News4Jax

On November 26, 2017, Jordan Cooper's mother contacted the Clay County Sheriff's Office to report her 25-year-old daughter missing. Jordan did not drive or work, and never left home without being accompanied by a family member. Law enforcement began a massive search effort to find Jordan. Two weeks later, detectives found Jordan hidden within the attic insulation of her home. She had been killed by suffocation.

As the search for a suspect continued, Joe Turner, a former neighbor and friend of the Cooper family, was arrested on separate burglary and grand theft charges in December 2017. He was hiding in the attic of his home.

Police searched the attic and found a bag of women's clothes nearby. Several pieces were later determined to have come from Cooper's home. DNA from the murder scene matched his.

Turner pleaded guilty to the murder of Jordan Cooper, Sexual Battery, and Burglary with Assault or Battery, and was sentenced to 55 years in prison. Turner is labeled a Sexual Predator.

The case was investigated by the Clay County Sheriff's Office and Florida Department of Law Enforcement. It was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorney Pam Hazel.



### COOPER FAMILY STATEMENT:

*Our hearts will forever be broken and missing the piece that is Jordan. Nothing will ever take her place, but her memory will always be with us.*

*Jordan was a true victim. She was in the place she felt most secure, her home, when she was brutally murdered and taken from us. A senseless tragedy. The guilty plea and sentencing of the perpetrator, after a four-year process, brings closure to the legal process and finally attains some type of justice for Jordan. While the negotiated sentence may not be what the defendant deserved, it will allow those who loved Jordan the opportunity to move forward and hopefully find peace.*

## Tattoo artist pleads guilty to sexual battery, sentenced to **10 years in prison**

News4Jax

Tattoo artist James Ranieri pleaded guilty to five counts of Sexual Battery and was sentenced to 10 years in prison, followed by 15 years of Sexual Offender Probation, and is classified as a Sexual Predator as a result of a March sentencing hearing.

Each of his victims shared stories with similar themes throughout the trial. Ranieri would befriend women through social media and dating apps before he would meet them in person. Those meetings would often take place in the Riverside neighborhood, Ranieri's tattoo studio, or at his apartment. Ranieri would build trust with his victims before isolating them, forcibly holding them down against their will, and raping them.

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

Two victims recalled their experiences:

He would seem really nice at first, and really calm, then completely shift.

He had a completely different personality, and then when I said, 'no' and wanted to leave, he turned into a completely different person.



## Life behind bars for Florida man who killed former girlfriend

First Coast News

On October 31, 2017, Chad Absher shot sisters Ashlee and Lisa Rucker. Ashlee, Absher's former girlfriend, died just feet away from Lisa, in front of Lisa's 4-year-old son and Ashlee's 9-year-old son. The bullet that struck Lisa Rucker went through her face and shattered her jawbone.

Before being transported to the hospital with life-threatening injuries, Lisa identified Absher as the person who had shot her and her sister, Lisa.

Another witness heard two gunshots and saw Absher flee the apartment with a rifle in his jacket. Absher—a convicted felon who was not legally allowed to possess a firearm—was later apprehended after a citywide manhunt. He had the rifle with him at the time of his arrest.

Absher took the stand and claimed he was the victim; that Ashlee shot her sister and then herself. The prosecution proved Absher's explanation impossible, and the jury rejected his testimony.

A jury found him guilty of First-Degree Murder and Attempted First-Degree Murder, and he will spend the rest of his life behind bars without the possibility of parole.

**The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Cameron French, Trey Atkinson, and Jen Braunstein.**



— **She was someone who was always there for me and that's what I miss most. She was someone who always stood up for others.**

Lisa Rucker, Ashlee's sister (pictured left; Ashlee pictured right)



## Man jailed in Coast Guard member's killing **pleads guilty** to Second-Degree Murder, armed burglary

News4Jax

Tyree Parker was sentenced to life in prison without parole in November for the 2021 killing of U.S. Coast Guard member Caroline Schollaert.

In the early morning hours of August 3, 2021, Schollaert called 911 from her Riverside home to report that she had found someone breaking into her car and was holding the suspect at gunpoint. The 911 operator then heard gunshots. When police arrived at the scene, Schollaert was dead. Home and neighborhood security video caught the shooting and depicted Parker near the scene. Detectives also found several items of Parker's nearby.

In sentencing Parker to life in prison, Judge Meredith Charbula said,

*"listening to this young lady die was one of the most chilling things I've ever heard—and I'm old and I've heard a lot."*

Schollaert's father, Pat, said his daughter always rooted for the underdog, advocated for women in the military, and was killed just days after getting engaged.

*"I won't be able to walk her down the aisle, I won't be able to see her grow," her father said. "Not only did he rob me, he robbed her fiancé, my wife, her brother, her family."*

**The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Lauren Randall and Dan Skinner.**

— **Caroline Schollaert was a selfless friend and bright light in this world, and she served our country with distinction in the U.S. Coast Guard. Her senseless murder has caused deep pain to those who knew and loved her.** State Attorney Melissa Nelson



# Return of Evidence

Just minutes into the New Year 1965, Tampa Police Department Officer William D. Krikava (pictured above) stopped to investigate a burglary in progress at a dress shop. When he opened the back door, he surprised the burglars. One of the burglars opened fire, striking Officer Krikava five times. He managed to return fire wounding one of the burglars, before dying in the line of duty. He was just 35 years old.



After 57 years, Officer William Krikava's belongings were returned, including his hat and revolver. Tampa Police presented his daughter, Tammy Krikavak, and grandson, Derek Carroll, with the Purple Shield and Gold Cross for his service.

The perpetrators were captured and granted a change of venue due to pretrial publicity. One of Officer Krikava's killers was tried and convicted in Duval County and sentenced to life in prison.

Despite justice having been served, the trial evidence—including Officer Krikava's uniform hat, service belt, department-issued firearm, and other tributes—remained in the custody of the Duval County Clerk of Courts due to Florida law retention requirements. For 57 years.

Until a heroic homecoming on July 1, 2022.

The Tampa Police Department, Duval County Clerk, and SAO Investigator Thomas Brady worked closely to coordinate the return of Krikava's belongings.

Then, thanks to a cooperative effort at both endpoints, Krikava's possessions made their way home nearly 200 miles away in

Tampa. The Tampa Police Department then transferred them to their rightful home—Officer Krikava's family.

The Tampa Police Department posthumously bestowed the Purple Shield as well as the Gold Cross upon Officer Krikava—honors that did not exist in 1965 when Officer Krikava made the ultimate sacrifice.

Special thanks to Clerk of Court Jody Phillips and Senior Manager Beth Fleet for finding this evidence; Fourth Circuit Judge Adrian Soud for the order allowing the transfer; SAO Investigator Tom Brady for facilitating; and Tampa Police Major Crimes Detectives James Smith and Mark Belmonte for making the drive to Jacksonville to officially accept and transport the evidence.

*Thank you for your service, Officer Krikava, and may your legacy live on.*

— **It's a long time coming. We've really wanted these belongings for a long time, so it's awesome to be able to receive them and honor his legacy.** Derek Carroll, a grandson of Krikava



HONORING THOSE WHO SUPPORT

# a talent for JUSTICE

In January, the *Florida Times-Union* published a profile about a very talented member of the office.



Jim McMillan created the office's Trial Support Services in January 2017. Since then, he has become an invaluable resource to the office's trial attorneys. He is a veteran law enforcement officer and forensic artist, who skillfully creates demonstrative aides that help attorneys present their cases to both juries and the public. Located on-site, McMillan is accessible to prosecutors and his expertise provides the office an edge in its recruiting efforts.

*"He catches details and sees things that others often do not. While he's looking at evidence and analyzing it, he's also thinking about the best way to present it in the context of a story that makes sense to a jury,"* said State Attorney Melissa Nelson. *"I thought he would be a great asset to the office if he would be willing to join us and be available to our lawyers and investigators, to help tell these important stories."*

McMillan often travels to crime scenes after they've been processed, takes his own measurements and reference photos, and looks for details other than what investigators might be looking for. He has been instrumental in reconstructing cold case crime scenes, displaying evidence to juries that might otherwise get lost in the shuffle of brown paper bags and evidence baggies, even helping crack old cases. McMillan cares deeply about these cases.

*Jim McMillan says he does all this...*

**to present a jury with as clear a representation of the crime scene as I can so that they are not confused about the space, or what things looked like. They don't have to wade through that while they are listening to the testimony being presented to them. ...I am trying to present things in an impartial way because the items will speak for themselves if presented correctly.**

The article highlights several of the complex cases for which he has prepared visual aides, and talks about his background as the son of a sheriff, a former patrolman and sketch artist for JSO, and his artistic training. His experience and skillset have made him a tremendous asset to the office.

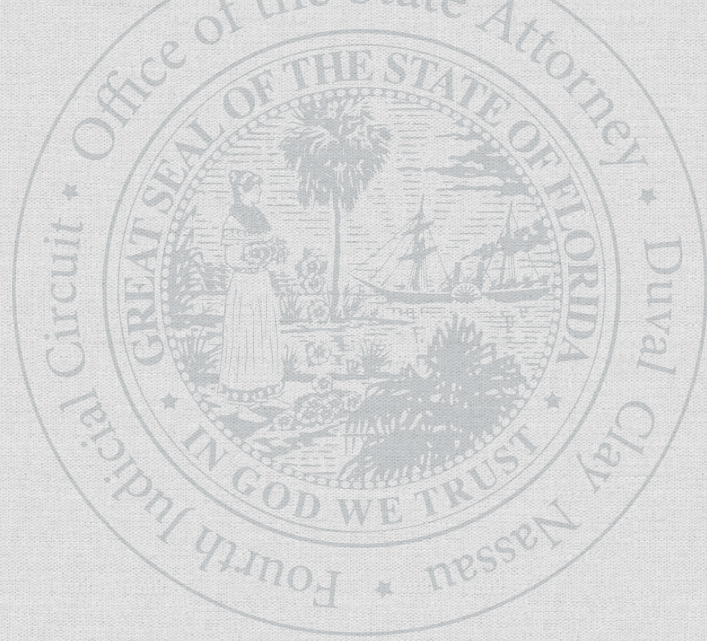
As described by the State Attorney, the 2018 Employee of the Year is known around the office as a *"talented forensic artist who's also got a great investigative mind."*







Chief Investigator Tim Quick saying a few words at his retirement celebration with the SAO4.



# Chief Investigator Tim Quick Retirement

Just before the holidays, the office celebrated Chief Investigator Tim Quick as he stepped into well-earned retirement in the new year. Quick joined the SAO4 in 2017 following an acclaimed career with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and law enforcement.

As Chief Investigator, Quick was the office's senior law enforcement liaison for the Fourth Circuit, overseeing a team of more than two dozen talented investigators who are integral to the office's mission. He played a leading role in the development of the SAO's Cold Case Initiative, Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer Awards, and Jacksonville's Crime Gun Intelligence Center, as well as myriad office policies and procedures.

Quick sat on the Florida Cold Case Advisory Commission and attended its quarterly meetings on the office's behalf. He also sits on the board of Project: Cold Case, and frequently spoke to outside organizations and agencies about the important role of investigations in prosecution.

Before his role as Chief Investigator, Quick most recently served as Special Agent in Charge of the NCIS Norfolk Office. He has also served in a variety of assignments and missions in state and overseas locations, including four assignments in war zones, a tour as Special Agent Afloat, the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, special operations, and a three-year assignment in cold case homicide.

In retirement, Quick is endeavoring to visit all 30 of the Major League Baseball stadiums with only about a dozen left to go, play as much softball as possible, attend Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp home games, and spend time with his family and dogs.

His work team gifted him a customizable keychain made from recycled baseball leather that allows him to commemorate each ballpark he visits.

The SAO4 was incredibly sad to see him go, but wishes him well in his next chapter.



Chief Investigator Tim Quick (center) with Chief Assistant L. E. Hutton & State Attorney Melissa Nelson.



## The Honorable Gerald Bard Tjoflat

In October, the SAO4 welcomed the Honorable Gerald Bard Tjoflat to talk about his time in State and Federal court. Because the Duval County State Attorney's Office is located in the former federal courthouse, he spoke to the office from historic Courtroom No. 1—the same courtroom where he presided over cases from 1970 to 1975.

**1957:**

Graduated from Duke Law School

**1970:**

Appointed to the federal bench by President Nixon

**1975:**

Appointed to the then-Fifth Circuit by President Ford

**1989:**

He was assigned to the new Eleventh Circuit when it was created, and served as the Chief Judge until 1996

**2014:**

Received Duke Law School's distinguished alumnus award

**2019:**

Assumed senior status

*Judge Tjoflat is one of the longest serving federal judges in U.S. history, serving for more than 50 years.*

**1995:**

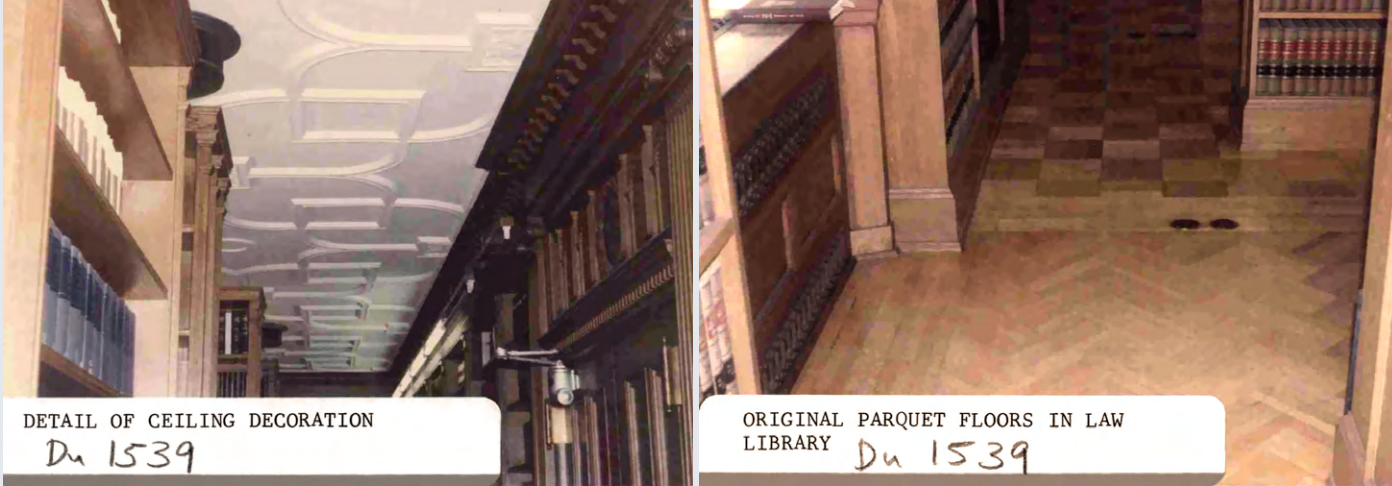
The Duke Law Journal published a tribute to Judge Tjoflat that included articles by then-Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court William H. Rehnquist and retired Justices Lewis F. Powell, Jr. and Byron R. White.



Over the past 50 years, Judge Tjoflat has employed **OVER 200 LAW CLERKS**, and more than half of those have been Duke Law School graduates. During his visit, he met with our very own Duke grads: ASA Daniel Cardenas, former ASA and now Judge Tatiana R. Salvador, ASA Octavius Holliday, and Judge Tjoflat's current Law Clerk Brendan Clemente (from left).







Florida Department of State Master Site File Architectural and Historical Survey photos of the Law Library from 1977.

# the historic SAO4 LIBRARY

After a multiyear renovation, the State Attorney's Office in 2015 moved into the historic U.S. Courthouse and Post Office, built in 1933.

On the fifth floor remains the original law library, constructed for the district's federal judges. Before the Internet and WestLaw, it was a space used by judges, clerks, and staff to research case law. In its heyday, it was packed full of rows and shelves of legal texts, as a functioning library.

When the building ceased to operate as the federal building and closed in 2003 after nearly 70 years in service, it sat empty for about a decade, exposed to the elements in many places. However, the Law Library survived in decent shape.

A local historic preservation team led by Kathy and Mitchell McDaniel oversaw the painstaking repair and refurbishment

of the Ed Austin Building and its historic library. The library's decorative plaster ceiling, wainscoting, shelving, windows, wall clock, and some doorknobs observed today are all original.

Although fully restored, the library was an empty shell of shelves.

State Attorney Melissa Nelson took office in 2017 and wanted to see those shelves returned to their original state of stacked statutes.

Local businesses Akerman LLP and NuView Realty donated boxes of various legal titles in February 2018. Then, ASA Marcus Isom learned that the closed Jones College was being emptied, and the college agreed to donate approximately 200 assorted law books to the SAO in November 2018.

Investigators, staff, and Isom himself physically toted the tomes across town to their new home in the historic library.

Today, the library, *featured on the cover of this publication*, is the crowning jewel of the Duval County SAO's office building. Even if online databases have discontinued the need to reference physical law books, the room serves as a special tribute to history, knowledge, and precedent.



## A FUN FLASHBACK

Then-County Court lawyers Rachel England and Brittany Johnson used physical statute books from 1985 to look up a since-replaced retail theft statute in 2018. Because WestLaw only includes publications dating back to 1988, the Law Library's stock came in handy.



Above: The unrepared Law Library pictured in 2009. Below: Historic Law Library shown in a state of repair in 2013.



Because the SAO is a State agency, its budget is legislatively prescribed (mainly for salaries) and is limited on allowable purchases. Donations to the office are extremely appreciated and directly benefit the public servants who work here. The SAO is grateful to these companies for their donations.



## HONORING THOSE WHO SUPPORT (CONTINUED)

# Chris Huband Named Deputy Director of Nassau County Office

In May, Assistant State Attorney Chris Huband was promoted to Nassau County Deputy Director. Huband leads an office of more than a dozen staff who serve the quickly growing North Florida county. Huband began his career in 2013, earning the "Rookie of the Year" award in 2014 and "State Attorney" award in 2017. Most recently, Huband worked in the Targeted Prosecution Unit as a division chief, where he specialized in prosecuting violent offenders, including homicides, shootings, and complex gang-related cases.



As a lifelong resident of Northeast Florida, I take great pride in doing my part to make our area so special. I am grateful for this opportunity and will work with law enforcement to continue to serve and get to know the people of Nassau County. *Chris Huband*

Deputy Director Huband is pictured with the Nassau County Sheriff's Office Investigations Division.





TRAINING & EDUCATION

# Staying On Top of Our Game

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



Left to right: Howard Coker, Chelsea Harris, David Thompson, Dan Iracki, and State Attorney Melissa Nelson

## Closing Arguments

In May, **Dan Iracki** of Coker Law gave a closing argument training to our prosecutors. He was joined by Howard Coker and former members of the SAO, including Chelsea Harris and David Thompson. Iracki is one of the youngest Board-Certified Civil Trial Lawyers in the state of Florida, a member of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, and is Florida's youngest member of the American Board of Trial Advocates. He has tried more than 65 civil jury trials, resulting in combined total judgments and verdicts of over \$75 million, with more than 19 multi-million-dollar verdicts. He talked with young attorneys about skillful closing arguments.



## War Story Wednesday

This year, we created a program to showcase our trial attorneys and their cases. Called "War Story Wednesday," we invited prosecutors to share their interesting and high-profile cases. Our inaugural meeting of the series was led by **Special Victim's Unit ASA Terence Martin** (left) and **Homicide Director Alan Mizrahi** (right).

They discussed the case and trial of the *State of Florida v. Ronnie Hyde* (see more on page 10).



## Art of Cross Examination

**Homicide Director Alan Mizrahi** presented the "Art of Cross Examination" training to our prosecutors. Using his broad experience of over two decades in the courtroom, Mizrahi shared Irving Younger's "**10 Commandments of Cross Examination**" with our newest as well as more seasoned prosecutors. Mizrahi has tried more than 180 jury trials, 57 of which were homicide trials.

## Victim Advocate Training with Community Partners



In March, the SAO4 hosted the first of what is hoped to be many cross-training opportunities, courtesy of the Jacksonville Victim Services Taskforce, a new collaboration between the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, City of Jacksonville, City of Jacksonville's Victim Services Center, and the SAO4. Hubbard House, Inc.'s Volunteer and Community Education Coordinator Stephanie Brown presented on the **Dynamics of Domestic Violence** and discussed their agency's resources for survivors. After, advocates from all agencies engaged in a productive question and answer session.

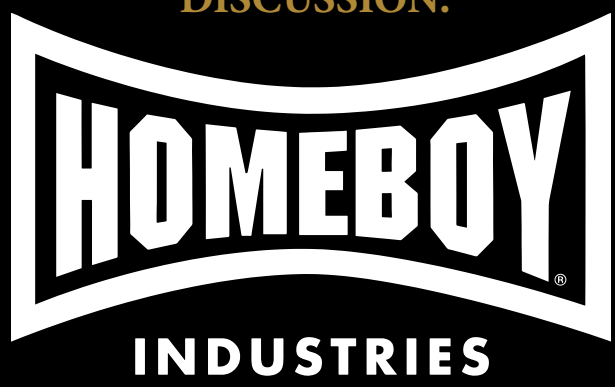
**Domestic violence continues to affect households and families in our community. Consequently, we as a community, must remain committed to seeking justice for victims and we must do our part to help families and loved ones heal in the aftermath of these crimes.**

Special Victims Unit Deputy Director Unit Khary Gaynor, State Attorney's Office

## SAO4 SPEAKER SERIES

What do you get when a prosecutor and a priest walk into a courtroom?

In this case, A REALLY POWERFUL DISCUSSION.



From 1986 to 1992, Father Boyle served as pastor of, then, the poorest Catholic parish in Los Angeles that also had the highest concentration of gang activity in the city. He is the founder of Homeboy Industries, the largest gang intervention, rehabilitation, and re-entry program in the world. Begun in L.A. in 1998, Homeboy Industries employs and trains former gang members in a range of businesses, as well as provides critical services to thousands of men and women who walk through its doors every year seeking a better life.

Father Greg Boyle spoke to the SAO4 in April. This speech was unique because of its audience. Father Greg spoke to prosecutors, public defenders, police detectives, ministers, social workers, journalists, and community leaders gathered at the SAO.

Accompanying Father Boyle were two

former gang members—now among the revered "Homies" at Homeboy Industries. Louis Phan and Isaac Gonzalez spoke about the impact Homeboy Industries has had on their lives after their releases from prison. The men spoke about the anger and pain in their backgrounds, and about the hope they've found through Homeboy Industries.

Father Greg talked about the belonging, sense of community, and healing created through the programs. *"If you ignore folks who are in gangs, then you're undercutting your best efforts at prevention,"* Boyle said. *"If you are doing intervention... that's how you break the cycle."*

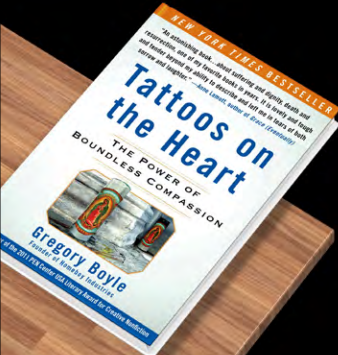
He went on to talk about how Homeboys and girls are "infused" with hope through their participation in the program.



You can watch the talk in its entirety at [bit.ly/3MwdX7n](https://bit.ly/3MwdX7n)

I think his message is important for people to hear. Two things stuck with me: every human being deserves dignity, and the power of redemption. He has, through his work, made these concepts more concrete and built decades of success. His model works.

State Attorney Melissa Nelson



Father Greg is the author of numerous books, including the 2010 best seller **Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion** and is the recipient of numerous prestigious awards.





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

# 2022 by the Numbers

To benefit our community, these key programs and initiatives were priorities in 2022.



## 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:  
**\$3.99 million<sup>1</sup>**

Civil citations issued to eligible youth:<sup>2</sup>

- **82%** – SAO4
- **68%** – Florida Average

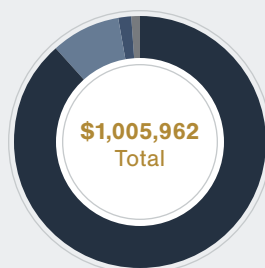
Juvenile civil citations issued:  
**865**



## Restitution Enforcement Program

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

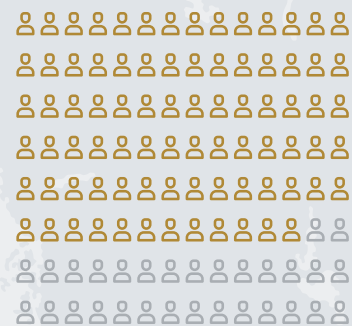
Collected for the State of Florida in restitution that goes to victims:



## Seal & Expunge Fair

This free event assists citizens with Duval county arrests to seal or expunge those records if eligible.

**112 ASSISTED**  
Citizens at the April Event



**82 ELIGIBLE**  
Citizens for Sealing or Expunge

# Community SEALING & EXPUNGING Fair

The SAO4 and its community partners held a Sealing & Expungement Fair on April 27 at Florida State College at Jacksonville's downtown campus.

Over 80 volunteers from the State Attorney's Office, Duval County Clerk of Courts, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Jacksonville Area Legal Aid, and LISC served more than 100 participants, with over 80 participants being able to seal or expunge their criminal record.



- 11** CLERK OF COURT Volunteers including the Clerk of Court
- 6** JSO (Jacksonville Sheriff's Office) Volunteers
- 3** FSCJ (Florida State College at Jacksonville) Volunteers
- 3** JACKSONVILLE AREA LEGAL AID Volunteers
- 3** MAYOR'S CBCR (Community Based Crime Reduction) & VRC Volunteers
- 1** CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY Volunteer
- 1** LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) Volunteers



**58 SAO4** Volunteers including State Attorney Melissa Nelson & 21 Assistant State Attorneys

One individual who was helped at the April event shared their appreciation a few months later for the services they received:

I got the final orders today sealing my record and I can't imagine a better 'gift' to start the New Year. Thank you for all your support in helping me get this done. You have no idea how important this is to me and my future.

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, bit.ly/3D7mPdJ, September 22, 2014, pg. 27; Florida DJJ Roadmap to System Excellence, bit.ly/3LgpxQt, August 1, 2013, pg. 32; Florida DJJ Civil Citations, May 2012. Estimated cost savings from using juvenile pre-arrest diversions rather than arrests is \$3,991,110. | 2. CC Dashboard | Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (state.fl.us)



# Community INVOLVEMENT

For the fifth year in a row, the SAO4's "2 LEGIT 2 KICK" team dipped, ducked, and dove into first place at the **annual kickball tournament** supporting the Women's Center of Jacksonville in recognition of National Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April.



## Walking Proudly for MLK Jr.

Team SAO4 hit the Downtown Jacksonville streets in January to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the **41st annual parade** in his honor.



## Domestic Violence Awareness Month



SVU Deputy Director Khary Gaynor joined Hubbard House, Inc., the City of Jacksonville, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, and other important community partners in October for the launch of **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**.

**We must do our part to help families and loved ones heal in the aftermath of these crimes.**

SVU Deputy Director Khary Gaynor



Photo credit: City of Jacksonville

You can learn more about this year's Here For You campaign at [hubbardhouse.org/news](http://hubbardhouse.org/news).



## Clay Neighborhood Engagement Team Meeting

Division Chief Hector Murcia-Bustos presented to the Clay County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) Fleming Island **Neighborhood Engagement Team (NET)** in June, answered questions from the group, and shared the office's social media and website information for the community to learn more about the office. He is pictured with Zone 3 administrator Kathleen Youel, CCSO Assistant Chief Jeremy Clark, and CCSO Community Affairs Deputy Maylon.



## Back-to-School Drive

On August 15, the SAO4 handed out two carloads of school supplies to students at **George Washington Carver Elementary School's orientation**. We especially enjoyed asking the students about their favorite subjects.



## Keynote Address at the Spirit of Giving

Each year at the **Hon. Harvey E. Schlesinger Spirit of Giving Luncheon**, lawyers who provide significant volunteer legal services to individuals in need are recognized by the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida.

In December, State Attorney Melissa Nelson delivered the keynote address to the group, discussing the role of the office in pursuing justice in criminal actions, as well as highlighting the role of the criminal defense Bar in ensuring the justice system works as it should.



## Helping Clay County Families Facing Addiction



In March, Clay County Diversion Coordinator Angela Sheppard, and victim advocates Samantha Youel and Katie Reddish participated in the Clay County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) **"Hammer and Hope" outreach event** at First Baptist Church of Keystone Heights. This event aims to serve individuals and family members in the community who struggle with or are directly impacted by illegal drug use. In the first quarter of 2022, CCSO removed more than 31 pounds of illegal drugs from Clay County streets including cocaine, fentanyl, opioids, and methamphetamine. The SAO applauds the CCSO's approach to combatting illegal drugs in the community by providing resources to help those fighting addiction to get back on track. Sheppard and Youel are pictured above with Sheriff Michelle Cook.





## The JBA Chili Cook-Off Heats Up with Team "PURSUE FLAVOR ALWAYS"



Team "Pursue Flavor Always" represented the office at the Jacksonville Bar Association Young Lawyers Section's annual Chili Cook-Off event

in February. The team's name was a play on the office's tagline: pursue justice always. Coworkers and the legal community cooked up chili, cornbread, and comradery at this fan-favorite event, which donated proceeds to a Florida charity.



**JU Law Class** County Court Director John Kalinowski and Smart Justice Coordinator Coral Messina spoke to the inaugural law school class at **Jacksonville University** about professionalism and prosecution.



## Making a Splash for ALS

State Attorney Melissa Nelson participated in the **ALS Association's "CEO Soak"** event for the second year. She addressed the group gathered on top of TIAA Bank Stadium and told them why the fight against ALS is so important to her. Then, she joined other local leaders who raised awareness and funds for ALS research by taking the plunge into the pool atop the stadium fully clothed in business attire.

As many as 30,000 people in the U.S. are living with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, with 5,000 new cases diagnosed each year, according to Johns Hopkins Medicine.

The CEO Soak event is the successor to the association's Ice Bucket Challenge, which circulated the Internet in 2014.



Hubbard House

**\$1,500+**

TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS & THEIR KIDS

## Raising Money at Stand Up & Stride 5K

Team SAO4 participated in Hubbard House's Stand Up & Stride 5K, the **13th Annual Domestic Violence Awareness Walk**, on April 23. Hubbard House, Inc. is a full-service domestic violence center that serves survivors in Duval and Baker counties. The office's team raised over \$1,500 for the organization. Every dollar raised during the walk provides life-changing shelter and services for survivors and their kids in our community.



## Touring the USS Orleck

The office's **Homicide Prosecution Team** was invited to tour the USS Orleck before it opened to the public as a naval history museum docked in Downtown Jacksonville.

The Orleck, a Gearing Class destroyer with 18 battle stars, is one of the most distinguished ships in U.S. history and exhibits Jacksonville's rich naval heritage.



# INVOLVEMENT

## Backpacks for Those In Critical Need

The SAO's Nassau Office chipped in to stuff backpacks full of supplies for those in critical need in the community. They contained essentials such as socks, personal care items, prescription disposal kits, as well as local resources for domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health resources, and much more.



They were donated to the **Nassau County Behavioral Health Coalition**, a collaborative group that was created to protect, promote, and improve the health of all people in the county through integrated state, county, and community efforts.

## Strengthening Connections Through H.O.P.E.

In November, the Jacksonville **Urban League** hosted **H.O.P.E.**, an annual community-wide event, to reduce crime by strengthening partnerships with individuals, communities, and law enforcement. Our ASAs enjoyed meeting and talking with 150+ students from all over the city, including some of Edward H. White High School and Sandalwood High School's royal court (pictured).



## Sheriff's Watch Annual Meeting



Every year, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office hosts a dinner and meeting for the 19 subsectors of its **Sheriff's Watch** program. It's a great opportunity to learn about other neighborhoods and meet involved residents across the city. The SAO4 always looks forward to the event and talking with engaged citizens.



# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (CONTINUED)



## A Proud Invitation to the JUDGE STEPHEN P. MICKLE, JR. COURTHOUSE DEDICATION

ASA Marcus Isom was a member of the same fraternity as the late Honorable Stephan Mickle of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida. He got to know the Judge and his wife Evelyn well while the Judge received medical treatment in Jacksonville, and Isom helped the family with rides to UF Health Jax. Mickle passed in Jan. 2021. When the Alachua County Courthouse was renamed for the late Judge, Ms. Mickle invited Isom to attend the ceremony in Jan. 2022. It was a moving event.

Judge Mickle was a respected man of the law who earned many firsts. He was the first African American to practice law in Alachua County since Reconstruction, to serve as Alachua County Court Judge, to serve on the Eighth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida, to work as a federal judge in the Northern District of Florida, and to hold the position of Chief Judge in that district. Judge Mickle was also the first African American undergraduate of UF and second African American UF Law graduate, and Ms. Evelyn Mickle was the first African American student to graduate from UF's nursing school. He was a triple Gator, earning his bachelor's, master's, and law degrees from the university, and was honored in 1999 as the school's first Black Distinguished Alumnus Award recipient.

Today, Judge Mickle's legacy, memory, and impact live on in the Judge Stephen P. Mickle, Sr. Courthouse. Isom is pictured standing next to Judge Mickle's portrait, which permanently hangs on the walls inside the courthouse for whom it is named.



This summer, **Clay County victim advocates** toured Naval Air Station Jacksonville and completed the Fleet & Family Support Center's first program training, alongside Clay County Sheriff's Office and Florida Attorney General's Office victim advocates. Not only did the group receive a tour of the base, but they were trained on their program and protocols. The groups discussed each of their individual support services and enjoyed fostering working relationships outside of phone calls and email.



## Breast Cancer Awareness & Bake Sale

Throughout the month of October, our Misdemeanor Filing Division held a bake sale fundraising for the **Susan G. Komen nonprofit**, in honor of a coworker.

They raised \$857. The SAO4 wore pink in solidarity with fighters, survivors, and the memories of loved ones impacted by breast cancer.



  
**\$857**  
RAISED  
TEAM GOAL WAS \$700



## Speaking With the NEFL Paralegal Association

Investigator Courtney Harrison and ASA Erin Wolfson spoke to the Northeast Florida Paralegal Association in August as part of the group's monthly Continuing Legal Education speaker series. Courtney and Erin—who is a cross-sworn Special Assistant United States Attorney especially for the purpose—together investigate and prosecute human traffickers in Northeast Florida, and spoke to the group about their important efforts.



## Powerful in Purple for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

The SAO4 wore purple on Friday, Oct. 17 in support of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.



## Traveling the Distance for MENTAL HEALTH

Launched in 2021, the **Mental Health Offender Program (MHOP)** aims to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses cycling in and out of the Duval County Jail on nonviolent misdemeanor charges. In June, the MHOP leadership team met with mental health leaders in Miami, FL to discuss innovative solutions to address mental illness in the criminal justice system. Judge Leifman gave the group a tour of the Miami Center for Mental Health and Recovery, which is slated to open in 2023.

Attendees included Chief Judge Mark Mahon, Dr. Colleen Bell (Sulzbacher Center), Eve Janocko (Circuit Court Administrator), Coral Messina (Assistant State Attorney), Steve Leifman (Miami-Dade County Court Judge), Cindy Funkhouser (CEO, Sulzbacher), David Kilcrease (MHOP Court Coordinator), Tricia Rover (Assistant Public Defender), Brooke Stephens-Brady (Duval County Magistrate), Kirby Givens (MHOP Program Manager, Sulzbacher), Cindy Schwartz.







Human Rights Division Director Octavius Holliday enjoyed participating in the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Teen Police Academy in mid-March.

## CAREER FAIRS GALORE!

Every chance we get, the SAO4 loves speaking with students about exploring careers in law, working in law enforcement, and addressing public safety concerns. We frequently attend career fair events across the Fourth Circuit. Pictured are career days and conversations from Ribault High School, AMI Kids, PACE Center for Girls, and Sandalwood High School.



Left: In October, ASA Coral Messina and CCSU Coordinator Kiaira Nixon participated in the PACE Center for Girls Career Day. Right: In March, ASA Jamaye McKinney spoke with Elevate Jacksonville students at Jean Ribault High School.



The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice and U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida invited the SAO4 to Pace Center for Girls for its "Girls with Pearls" initiative. ASAs Jamaye McKinney and Katherina Brown talked with students about how self-esteem is strongly associated with decision-making abilities as well as ways to improve how they feel about themselves.



Left: ASA Austin Kwikel speaks to students at Sandalwood's career fair. Right: ASAs Octavius Holliday and Marcus Isom answer questions from students at AMI Kids' career day.



### Zone 2 Baseball Enthusiasts



While participating in a Zone 2 Sheriff's Watch community event, ASA Marcus Isom and some JSO officers came across a youth baseball team hard at practice. Being the sports enthusiast that he is, Isom got to talking with the players and their parents, and learned they were on a winning streak. Isom exchanged information with a parent and asked to be updated on the team's progress. He was pleased to learn later that the Fort Caroline Indians youth baseball team became the 2022 8U B State Champions! About 40 teams total competed, and this team took home the trophy.



### 5000 Role Models

Our ASAs enjoyed discussing their day-to-day work and sharing about the classes and extracurricular activities that prepared them for the courtroom with 5000 Role Models in February. The 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project provides minority males with a sense of hope and images of success through mentorship and exposure. We're excited to see these students make a transformative difference in the world.



### D. W. Perkins Bar Annual Meeting

ASA Marcus Isom Jr. was sworn in as D. W. Perkins Bar Association president-elect in October at the organization's annual meeting. A group of SAO4 Bar members was in attendance to support Marcus and the Perkins Bar.



## A Doggone Halloween

County Court staff were spotted having a doggone fun time on Halloween, dressed as the 101 Dalmatians, joined by Director John Kalinowski and Cruella de Vil (Supervisor Hope Kavalow) herself. Pictured left, the office Pawsecutor poses with a JSO officer on Halloween.



### Denim Day 2022

Wearing jeans on April 27 has become an international symbol of protest against destructive attitudes and myths surrounding sexual assault. The SAO4 stood in solidarity with survivors by wearing denim and donating to support the Women's Center of Jacksonville's survivor services. The WCJ is the only certified rape crisis center for Baker, Duval, and Nassau counties providing numerous services to survivors.



### Nassau Christmas Community Project

The SAO4 Nassau County Office hosts a community Christmas event each year. For the past few years, they have supported Family Support Services by sponsoring a family in need through its Be An Angel project. The office donated gifts and funds towards the family's wish list. The family's caregivers and caseworkers joined the office this week to surprise the children with the gifts. It was a very merry time!



# 2021 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 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

JSO Information Technology Analyst Lindsey Watson

## Investigative Excellence

JSO TFO/Detective Garret Bennett  
 FBI Special Agent Joshua McLeod  
 JSO TFO/Detective Butch Misener  
 JSO TFO/Detective John Venosh  
 JSO Sergeant David Griffis  
 GCSPD Detective David Carpenter  
 FBI Intelligence Analyst Dana Aydelott  
 FBI Language Analyst Lucy Bujnak  
 USAO MDFL Assistant United States Attorney Michael Coolican  
 FBI Special Agent Blake Eber  
 FBI Supervisory Intelligence Analyst Frank Hinrichs  
 FBI Supervisory Special Agent Mickey Martin  
 FBI Staff Operations Specialist Lauren Ryan  
 NCIS TFO Juan Smaine-Rovira  
 FBI Language Analyst Fiona Yiu

## Leadership Award

JSO Sergeant Nuria Archbold

## Citizen & Volunteer Partnership Award

K-9s United Founder Debbie Johnson

## K-9 Valor Award

JSO K-9 Service Dog "Chaos" & Officer Dale Cullen

## State Attorney Award

Columbia County Sheriffs Office Deputy Jimmy Watson  
 FBI Supervisory Special Agent Abbigail Beccaccio

## Meritorious Service Award

FDLE Biology Lab Analyst Amanda Stratton

## Lifesaving Award

CCSO Deputy Jason Tollick  
 CCSO Deputy Ken Murray

## Bravery Award

FDLE Special Agent David Brock

## Medal of Valor Award

JSO Officer Marshall Bowles





**EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**  
**Devin Lybrand**

**DISTINGUISHED SERVICE**  
**Coral Messina**

**STATE ATTORNEY'S AWARD**  
**L. E. Hutton**

**MISSION, VISION, & VALUES AWARD**  
**David Chapman**

**ROOKIE OF THE YEAR**  
**Sandra Brose**  
**Jamie Cona**

**TRIAL ADVOCACY**  
**Brooke Gasson**

**GROUP ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**  
**Unit Supervisors:**

**Kim Baggett**  
**Toni Binder-Glase**  
**Dawn Carter**  
**Donna Cornellier**  
**Teresa Covert**  
**Stacy Dale**  
**Lisa Foreman**  
**Shannon Gibbs**  
**Brian Hughes**  
**Becky Hurtado**  
**Hope Kavalow**  
**Teresa Lewis**  
**Nick May**  
**Josie Rodriguez**

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**  
**Renae Lewin**

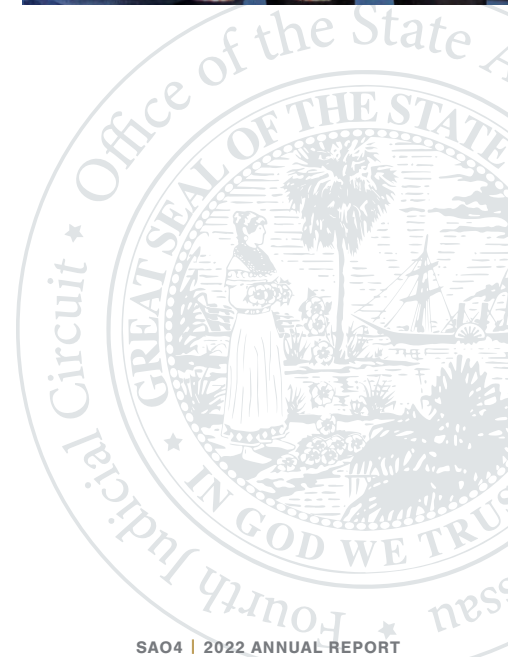
**LEADERSHIP**  
**Hope Kavalow**

**OUTSTANDING INVESTIGATION**  
**Rex Rudisill**

**OUTSTANDING TRIAL SUPPORT**  
**Angie Judah**

**OUTSTANDING TEAM MEMBER**  
**Jareh Kelly**  
**Nicole Soto**

**2021** | **SAO4**  
**Employee**  
**Awards**







# 2021 Awards for Years of Service

**35** YEARS

Laura Bottin  
Lisa Foreman  
Pat Rogers

**30** YEARS

Theresa Miller

**25** YEARS

Kim Baggett  
Joyce Bennett  
Lynne Camera  
Teresa Covert  
Tammy Klaiber  
Sheila Loizos

**20** YEARS

Khary Gaynor  
Pam Hazel  
John Kalinowski  
Terence Martin  
Rex Rudisill  
Robin Wallace  
Cyrus Zomorodian

**15** YEARS

Sabrina Belton  
Malori Crowder  
Karen Daughtry  
Joanna Long  
Teresa Matthews  
Anita Nissen  
T.C. O'Steen

**10** YEARS

Lori Carr  
Stacy French  
Dave Johnston  
Kristen Liesch  
Leah Owens  
Mike Smith  
Ashley Terry Young

**5** YEARS

Hanne Pederson  
Diogo Quirino  
Victoria Welch



## Interns Back in Full Force

Over the course of the year, spring, summer, and fall internships were back in full force. 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.

All in all, the office hosted almost 40 terrific interns this year.







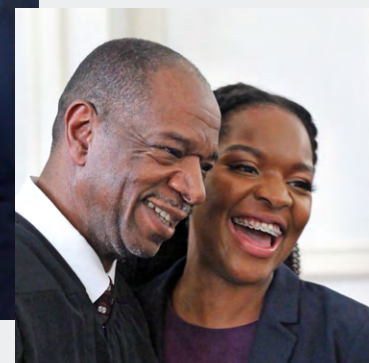
## ASSISTANT STATE ATTORNEYS CLASS OF 2022

The office welcomed new Assistant State Attorneys in September. They were sworn in to the Florida Bar during a ceremony in Historic Courtroom No. 1 by the Honorable James A. Ruth 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.



## An Honorable Legacy

New ASA Shaina Ruth was surprised when her father, the Honorable James A. Ruth, was announced as the officiating judge who would be swearing in the Class of 2022.

Both her father and mother, Michelline Ruth, met while working at the SAO4. Her parents were both former assistant state attorneys at this office, and Shaina proudly follows in their footsteps.



CELEBRATING OUR OWN



# A Shout Out for Our EMPLOYEES' ACCOMPLISHMENTS



## Selected for the Florida Bar Leadership Academy

This training program is designed to help a diverse and inclusive group of Florida attorneys become even better leaders.



**Assistant State Attorney Marcus L. Isom Jr.** was selected for the 2022-23 class of The Florida Bar Leadership Academy's fellows program.



## Mayoral Appointment to the Jacksonville Ethics Commission

In April 2022, **Assistant State Attorney Austin Kwikkel** received a mayoral appointment to the Jacksonville Ethics Commission, which provides a local forum for consideration and investigation of ethical problems and issues in the city.

## Mayoral Appointment to the Downtown Development Review Board

**Community Engagement Coordinator Linzee Ott** received a mayoral appointment in April to the Downtown Development Review Board, which reviews and makes decisions with respect to applications for development and redevelopment within Jacksonville's Downtown Overlay Zone.



## Leadership Jacksonville Next Generation 2022

**Assistant State Attorneys Clare Kelly (left) and Corie Posey (right)** graduated from the Leadership Jacksonville Next Generation 2022 program. Participants interact with community leaders, network with professionals, and go behind the scenes to explore difficult issues facing Northeast Florida and learn from community successes.



## Leadership Jacksonville Class of 2023

**Circuit Court Division Chief LaTasha Campbell** was selected for the Leadership Jacksonville Class of 2023, a year-long program that further prepares community stewards for future leadership.



## JBj's 2022 Class of 40 Under 40

**Community Crime Strategies Unit Coordinator Kiaira Nixon** was selected for the Jacksonville Business Journal's 2022 40 Under 40 award.



## Speaking to Students at UF Levin College of Law

**ASAs Katelyn Johnston and Adam Duso** spoke to UF Levin College of Law students in March as part of the Virgil D. Hawkins Civil Clinics Speaker Series. Duso and Johnston described a day in the life of a prosecutor and our Circuit's charge to pursue justice always.

## NEFRC Overdose Panel

At the end of March, **ASA Annie Maguire** participated in a panel discussion hosted by the Northeast Florida Regional Council Overdose Summit about the overdose crisis in our area, and what Fourth Circuit prosecutors are doing to crack down on drug dealers.



## Two 30-Year Celebrations

A very special milestone was reached in the fall. On November 11, **Secretary Robbie Cox** celebrated her 30th anniversary at the SAO, and **ASA Marcus Isom** celebrated his 30th birthday! While eating lunch one day, the pair realized that Robbie's first day at the SAO was the same day Marcus was born. Marcus gifted her flowers to mark this major moment.



KEEPING THE SAO4 TEAM SPIRIT ALIVE & SWEET

# SAO4 SCOOPS

At the height of summer, the office cooled down by hosting its first “SAO4 Scoops” celebration, a fun Friday event where all of the office’s directors served staff scoops of ice cream. The historic fifth floor hallway was transformed into a nostalgic ice cream parlor, complete with treats, toppings, and team spirit.







#### **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**