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## Lawyer Snapshot: Markus Sermons



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09/05/2011

from staff

**Name:** Markus Sermons

**Age:** 30

**Family:** Wife, Tina, four sons and one daughter

**Pets:** Berlin (white German shepherd)

**Education:** B.A., Management, Valdosta State University, and Juris Doctorate, Florida Coastal School of Law.

**Admitted to the Bar:** Florida 2009 and Middle District of Florida 2010

**Employed by:** Office of the Public Defender

**Field of practice:** Criminal defense

**Professional organizations:** The Jacksonville Bar Association and American Bar Association.

**Community involvement:** Jacksonville Area Legal Aid and The Jacksonville Bar Association puts on "Ask-A-Lawyer" events where groups of attorneys, representing various practice areas, are assembled to go into communities and give advice to residents that typically lack resources that would make legal advice readily available to them. I have been involved with the past two events, and I am scheduled to participate in an upcoming event. Additionally, I will occasionally accompany Teen Court and Truancy Director Lawrence Hills to schools to speak with young people regarding my life experiences and offer them encouragement.

**How did you get involved?** An email regarding an "Ask-A-Lawyer" event was forwarded to me by a friend. The email stated that attorneys were still needed in some areas, including probate. At the time, I was the staff attorney/law clerk in the probate division and was responsible for assisting Circuit Judge Peter Dearing, the sole judge assigned to probate for all of Duval County, through research and reviewing files. I contacted JALA and offered to help answer questions regarding probate law at the next "Ask-A-Lawyer" event. With regard to speaking to school children, Lawrence Hills simply asked me to join him one day in speaking to a group of children.

**How can someone else get involved?** Kathy Para from JALA is the contact person for the "Ask-A-Lawyer" events.



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**What have you learned/achieved through the experience?**I've learned that sometimes being paid with a smile and a sincere "thank you" feels 10 times better than cashing a check.

**What was the last book you read or are reading?** Florida Rules of Criminal Procedure.

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