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## Local public defenders office staff receive awards

### Matt Shirk presents kudos to top attorneys and staff

BY DAN SCANLAN | STORY UPDATED AT 12:36 PM ON MONDAY, FEB. 1, 2010

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Fourth Circuit Public Defender Matt Shirk handed out his office's annual employee awards Jan. 29. Part of the annual meeting most of Shirk's 150 attorneys, secretaries, investigators and paralegals from the Duval, Clay and Nassau County offices were present.

The Clay County Employee of the Year was Investigator Clarence "Buddy" Tyrell; Nassau County Employee of the Year was Assistant Public Defender Tom Townsend; and Duval County Employee of the Year was Investigator Holly Ayers.

The Trial Lawyer of the Year was Assistant Public Defender William Tedford, while the Exemplary Team Performance of the Year was the defense team of attorneys Christina Romero and William Tedford, investigators Kendall Anderson, Andrew Ewing Hal Bennett, Greg Strickland, Holly Ayers and Denis Sanchez, and paralegal Lori Frank in the case of the State vs. Victoria Roberts.

The guest speaker was [William Dillon](#), released from prison in late 2008 after DNA evidence exonerated him 27 years into a lif sentence for a 1981 Brevard County murder.

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