



NEWS FROM:
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Public Defender January Victories in the Courtroom

Jacksonville, FL: (February 15, 2011): Criminal defense teams from the Law Offices of Public Defender Matt Shirk continue to be successful in Duval County and Circuit courtrooms. Several Assistant Public Defenders were involved in earning Not Guilty verdicts for their clients.



The State of Florida vs. Fitzgerald Thaxton: Lead Defense attorney **Stephanie Schaap** (center) and 2nd Chair APD **Owen Schmidt** teamed up to fight the charge of Grand Theft Auto that Mr. Thaxton faced. They argued that their client was wrongfully charged because the car he allegedly stole was marital property shared by him and his wife. The Judge issued a Judgment of Acquittal finding that the State failed to make a prima facie in this January trial.

The following week, **APD Schmidt** assisted lead attorney **Stephanie Jaffe** (left) in The State of Florida vs. Albert Hunter. Their client faced a Felony Battery charge for allegedly punching his girlfriend and then a Resisting without Violence charge after law enforcement arrived. His arrest came amidst a child custody battle. The Defense discredited the State's eyewitness during cross examination causing the jury to render a Not Guilty verdict at the February 1st trial.



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Several other January trials resulted in Not Guilty verdicts for Assistant Public Defenders including; Lead **Mary Hickson** and 2nd Chair **Katy A. Harris** in The State of Florida vs. Christopher Cribb where they cleared their client of charges of Sexual Battery; slight force, and false imprisonment.

Assistant Public Defender **Greg Messor** tried two cases: The State of Florida vs. Edward Lamont Hicks where the Defendant was charged with Possession of a Firearm by Convicted Felon, Aggravated Assault with a Firearm and Battery. The State was forced to drop the Possession charge because he was only found guilty of misdemeanor simple assault.

Additionally, **APD Messor** tried The State of Florida vs. Robert Ellis. The Defendant was charged with Felony Battery and Unarmed Robbery. He was found Not Guilty on the first count and guilty of lesser-included offense of robbery by sudden snatching.

In The State of Florida versus Calvin Warren, **APD Jason Snyder** represented his client on charges of Battery on a Law Enforcement Officer, Resisting an Officer with Violence, and some insignificant misdemeanor offenses. During trial, Mr. Snyder argued that the officer sustained no visible injuries, which was inconsistent with his testimony that he was hit repeatedly by the Defendant. An eyewitness was called to verify Warren's version of events. After 20 minutes of deliberations, the jury returned a Not Guilty verdict on the Battery and a misdemeanor lesser included offense of resisting without violence.
