



**NEWS FROM:**  
**Office of Public Defender**  
**Matt Shirk, Fourth Circuit**  
[www.MattShirkPublicDefender.com](http://www.MattShirkPublicDefender.com)

**Contact: Matt Bisbee**  
**Public Information Officer**  
**Tel: (904)630-7350**  
[MPB@PD4.COJ.net](mailto:MPB@PD4.COJ.net)

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## **Public Defender Announces Annual Fourth Judicial Circuit Awards**

Jacksonville, FL: Fourth Judicial Circuit Public Defender Matt Shirk is releasing the names of the recipients of his office annual awards program; Trial Lawyer of the Year (Circuit-wide), Exemplary Trial Team of the Year (Circuit-wide), Clay County Employee of the Year, Duval County Employee of the Year and Nassau County Employee of the Year.



**Trial Lawyer of the Year: Assistant Public Defender Sandra Young**  
Presently a Division Chief in the Felony Court Unit, APD Young began with the PD Office in August 1998. The Jacksonville resident holds a Juris Doctor from The University of Florida College of Law and a Bachelor's from Florida A&M University.

According to her colleagues, APD Young is a "humble APD veteran. She is thoroughly prepared and unimpeachable." Seventy-four attorneys are on staff and eligible for the nomination; the full staff of 144 in the 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit (Clay, Duval and Nassau Counties) votes for this award.



**Duval County Employee of the Year: Legal Assistant Rosa Simons**  
Ms. Simons has been employed full-time with the PD Office for nearly three years and presently serves as a Legal Assistant in the Circuit Court Unit. She earned a degree with honors in Criminal Justice from the University of North Florida. She and her husband live in Jacksonville and have three children.

"People really inspire me; I am grateful and honored by this award," said Ms. Simons. "I learn from the attorneys and I learn from my co-workers. We should strive to be the best we can be and never settle." Simons begins working toward Paralegal certification in January at Florida State College at Jacksonville.



**2010 Exemplary Trial Team Award: The State vs. Breon Glenn** This trial concluded on April 21<sup>st</sup> when a jury found Mr. Glenn not guilty of second-degree murder. The defense completed discovery and tried the case to verdict all before the time allotment for a speedy trial expired.

The team consisted of (L-R) Lead APD Ian Weldon, Asst. Barbara Carter, Glenn, Paralegal Sue Chamberlain, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair APD Todd Niemczyk, Asst. Nola Choquette, Investigator Kendall Anderson. Paralegal Susy Murrhee is not pictured.

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### **Clay County Employee of the Year: Legal Assistant Beth Frill**

Ms. Frill has been with the 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit PD Office in Clay County for 11 years and presently serves as a Legal Assistant. Ms. Frill and her husband Tim live in Green Cove Springs with their two children; they are active at Hibernia Baptist Church.

“I am blessed in the fact that I love my job and the people that I work with,” said Ms. Frill. “Our job is never easy, but for me it is a daily exercise of grace and mercy to our clients. Of course, it could never compare to the grace and mercy shown to us by our Heavenly Father! Hearing the sentiments of my peers has been very humbling, because without Him I would be none of those things!”



### **Nassau County Employee of the Year: Investigator Len Johnson**

Mr. Johnson has served in the 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit PD Office since January 2009 as the lead Investigator for Nassau County. Prior to that appointment, he spent nearly 24 years with the State Attorney Office, first as a Paralegal and later as an Investigator in Nassau County. Presently a Coast Guard Reservist which he has been for 31 years, Mr. Johnson earned a degree in Criminal Justice at UNF.

“I am very grateful to Matt Shirk for the opportunity to serve the PD Office team. The employees are hard working and dedicated public servants. To be chosen by my colleagues in Nassau County for this award is truly an honor.”

“There are several different functional areas within the Office of the Public Defender and together we work toward the common goal of providing quality, effective legal representation for the indigent accused in Florida’s 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit,” said Public Defender Matt Shirk. “The recipients of our Annual Awards all come from different areas of the office and all of them excel in their jobs. I congratulate each of the winners and thank all staff for your dedication to this important public service.”

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