



NEWS FROM:
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For Immediate Release

March 22, 2010

P. D., FreshMinistries, JALA Give Workshop on Record Sealing, Expunging to Eastside Community; Outreach, Education Part of Shirk Mission

Jacksonville, FL: Unemployment continues to burden communities across the nation; however in Jacksonville Public Defender Matt Shirk is partnering with neighborhood leaders to ensure that the unemployed understand and utilize the legal tools available to them so they are best equipped to get a job.



On Thursday March 18th, Shirk provided a workshop for more than 125 residents of Jacksonville's Eastside Community detailing the process for sealing and expunging criminal records. FreshMinistries, a non-profit organization who sponsors the Eastside Community Association arranged the workshop which featured Mr. Shirk, along with Assistant Public Defender Hugh Wilkinson and LaVerne Andrasen from Jacksonville Area Legal Aid (JALA). Following a brief lecture

about the process, the three attorneys engaged in intensive question and answer time where they addressed a variety of individual cases. Organizers are working on scheduling future events similar to this one that would take place at the Eastside Community Center.

“People want to work and earn a paycheck,” said Shirk. “To the extent I can assist them by providing legal guidance, I will. Let me thank FreshMinistries for their ongoing commitment to this community and JALA for offering their expertise at the recent workshop. I look forward to partnering with those organizations for future events of this nature.”

Community outreach is important to Matt Shirk. He continues to work with Jacksonville neighborhood associations and community groups, providing legal guidance and education about the criminal justice system. Such outreach, he believes, can help deter crime, reduce the caseload before the Public Defender's Office and improve the quality of life.

PAGE 2: PHOTOS “Workshop, Eastside Community”



(L-R) Public Defender Matt Shirk and Beverly Toney, FreshMinistries’ Director of the 6 Point Community Initiative East Jacksonville. Ms. Toney arranged the presentation from Mr. Shirk before 127 Eastside residents on March 18 at The Children’s Commission.



Assistant Public Defender Hugh Wilkinson (r) works with an individual on a case involving the sealing/expunction of a criminal record.



(L-R) LaVerne Andreasen, a staff attorney at Jacksonville Area Legal Aid and Public Defender Matt Shirk prepare the presentation.