



NEWS FROM:
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Public Defender Capital Team Earns Client Life Recommendation

Jacksonville, FL: A Duval County jury has recommended a life sentence without parole for convicted murderer Jeffery Washington. Persistent and dedicated advocacy provided by the team at the Law Office of Public Defender Matt Shirk effectively saved Mr. Washington's life in August, clearly showing that a death sentence should only be used for the worst of the worst convicted felons. Assistant Public Defender



Melina Buncome-Williams who led the penalty phase of *The State vs. Jeffery Washington* convinced jurors that her client is "a good man who you met on his worst day."

Ms. Buncome-Williams led the Defense during the penalty phase of this trial which concluded in mid-August and credits her entire team for the favorable sentence. APD and Circuit Court Director Fred Gazaleh was first chair in the guilt phase of the case. Assisting the attorneys were investigators Holly Ayers and Paula DeLuca as well as support staff members Susy Murrhee and Barbara Carter.

"Death should not be taken lightly," said Mr. Shirk. "I commend our entire team in the Capital Crimes Unit of the Public Defender's Office; on a daily basis they are considering serious situations that are literally matters of life and death and there is no room for error. APD Buncome-Williams did a tremendous job in the Washington case and a life recommendation from the jury indicates that the people of the Fourth Judicial Circuit are well served."



(L-R: APD/Director Fred Gazaleh, APD Buncome-Williams, Paralegal Susy Murrhee, Legal Assistant Barbara Carter, Investigators Holly Ayers and Paula DeLuca.)
