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For Immediate Release

February 28, 2010

## **P.D. Felony Court Unit Earns February Not Guilty** *Winning Defense Team of Hickson/Lance Clears Client of Attempted Murder Charge*

Jacksonville, FL: Quality, effective representation of clients is the sole mission of attorneys in the Office of Fourth Circuit Public Defender Matt Shirk. One recent trial Circuit Court shows that Assistant Public Defenders continue to carry out this commitment.

After 48 minutes of deliberations, a Duval County jury has acquitted a Jacksonville man of attempted murder charges. Lead Defense attorney, Assistant Public Defender Mary Hickson asserted that Christopher Thompson was only trying to protect himself from his former



girlfriend's new boyfriend during the September '09 altercation. The trial took place at the Duval County Courthouse on February 12th, APD Senovia Lance assisted Hickson throughout the proceedings.

“It is a real testament to our attorneys when they get a client a ‘not guilty’ verdict in Felony Court,” said Shirk. “The stakes are high, the charges are serious and the State is going to bring a thorough prosecution. But we are reminded that a person charged in America is innocent until proven guilty. In *The State vs. Christopher Thompson*, our client was

acting in self-defense and I applaud Mary and Senovia for doing a tremendous job illustrating that for the jury.”

A nine-year veteran of the Public Defender's Office, APD Mary Hickson (pictured, right) was recently elevated to a Division Chief in the Felony Court Unit. Her second chair in this case, APD Senovia Lance (pictured, left), was promoted in January to the new Major Crimes Unit.

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