



NEWS FROM: Office of the Public Defender Matt Shirk, Fourth Judicial Circuit www.MattShirkPublicDefender.com

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Public Defender Office Joins Community Leaders in Discussion on Crime and Education in Jacksonville

Jacksonville, FL (April 25, 2011): In the wake of a tragic mid-March shooting which led to the death of twenty-three year old Charles J. Jenkins of the 2000 Block of Second Avenue, people around the Jacksonville community are coming together in hopes of solving the ever-present issues of violent crime within the city. On March 31st, students, parents, civic leaders and representatives from agencies throughout Jacksonville all gathered together for a Community Town Hall Meeting on Crime and Education, hosted by the Northeast Florida Accountability Forum Corporation.



Defender Matt Shirk. Assistant Public Defender (APD) De'Anna Hines (left), Investigator Kendall Anderson (middle) and attorney Hugh Wilkinson (right) all took part in event in order to listen to concerns of citizens and offer legal perspectives on the problems the city is facing.

Founder, Eunice Barnum, and co-moderator, Chelsi P. Henry, moderated the meeting held at the Philippi Missionary Baptist Church. There were two panels; one made up of local, public high school students and one of community leaders. Both groups fielded questions from the moderators and the audience.

The community leader panel included personnel from The Law Offices of Public



(L-R: Linda Dayson, APD De'Anna Hines, Eunice Barnum and student participants)

Defender Matt Shirk stated, "It is important that we as public defenders stay connected in the community. Part of our job is listening to the needs of the people we serve and coming to their aid whenever the opportunity arises. I am proud to lead a team who is not only willing to help, but also truly desires to make positive advancements in this city through community involvement."

Ms. Eunice Barnum included a Special Thanks to all involved with the successful event: "Pastor Brodes Perry of PHILIPPI MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH for the use of his church, Miss. Alyla Barnum

(Ribault Middle) for the song "Children Are Our Future", Mrs. Collana Sambolah for the praise dance "

What About The Children", Mr. Matt Bisbee from the Public Defenders' Office for the photos, and Mrs. Janice Jennings for all her valuable assistance."

Ms. Barnum continued; "Special Thanks To Our Moderator; Ms. Chelsi Henry- Soil & Water Conservation Regional District 4, Our Panelists: Attorney Natalie Maxwell-Southern Legal Counsel, Inc., Benetta Standly MPA-Director, Northeast Region of Florida ACLU, APD De'Anna M. Hines, Attorney Hugh Wilkinson, Investigator Kendall K. Anderson, all from the Public Defender's Office, Assistant Chief David Coffman-JSO Community Affairs Division, Mr. Gary Dickinson-JSO ShAdCo/Crime Prevention, Lt.Derrick Mitchell-PAL of Jacksonville, JSO Officers and Members of the JSO Police Explorer Program, Linda Dayson-President of Hurting Families With Children In Crime, and **OUR STUDENT PANEL-which was excellent in their deliverance of their thoughts, feelings, and ideas concerning their schools, and their visions of how to make the schools better; sorry however, that no one from the Duval County School Board, nor the Department of Education honored the invite, and therefore was not present at this Community Town Hall Meeting on Education and Crime.**"

"On behalf of the Northeast Florida Accountability Forum Corporation (NO-FLAC), we would like to express our sincere thanks, and appreciation for your attendance and participation to all of our 75 + people in the audience," said Barnum. "At a later date, to be announced, Northeast Florida Accountability Forum Corp. (NO_FLAC) will host Part II of the Community Town Hall Meeting on Education and Crime."
