



NEWS FROM:
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PD Shirk Elected Secretary of State Board **4th Judicial Circuit Investigator Honored at Annual Awards Ceremony**

Clearwater Beach, FL: The Florida Public Defender Association (FPDA) has elected new leadership to its Board of Directors and Fourth Judicial Circuit Public Defender Matt Shirk becomes Secretary of the organization. In this role, he will be charged with recording minutes of all meetings of the association for the next year.



“FPDA is a tremendous tool for the 20 Public Defenders throughout Florida,” said Shirk. “The level of participation from the different Circuits coupled with the institutional knowledge and effective ability of the staff keeps our Constitutional mission front and center in Tallahassee. We have to fight for our fair share in the state budget process so ultimately we can best serve our clients. I’m thrilled to take on this leadership role and continuing the work of the Association in the pursuit of justice.”

The elections of the new officers took place at the start of *Building a Better Defense*, the annual summer training conference of the FPDA. The 20 elected Public Defenders met privately to determine new office holders for one year terms. PD Nancy Daniels (2nd Circuit, Tallahassee) is the new President, PD Julianne Holt (13th Circuit, Tampa Bay) is President Elect, PD Bob Dillinger (6th Circuit, St. Petersburg) is Vice President, PD James Purdy (7th Circuit, Daytona Beach) is Treasurer.

Also taking place at the annual training conference was the presentation of awards. PD Matt Shirk presented 4th Judicial Circuit Investigator David Douglas (pictured, right) with the “Investigator of the Year” award. Mr. Douglas briefly addressed the large assembly; he thanked the Jacksonville-based office for its support of him and noted the uniqueness of the statewide PD system.



Several training sessions and classes for different office personnel were offered during the three day conference. Director A.L. Kelly of the Fourth Judicial Circuit was re-elected to the FPDA Board as Investigations Representative and organized the investigator training. He arranged staff and outside experts to present to PD investigators on issues such as firearms and ballistics, drugs and narcotics and crime scene processing/evidence collection.



A first-ever class on The History of the Public Defender was offered to those attending the Support Staff training. PD Richard Parker (6th Circuit, Gainesville) recalled the events that led to the landmark Supreme Court decision, *Gideon vs. Wainwright*, which eventually led to the mandated provision of public defense for the indigent. Mr. Parker had several of the Public Defenders from other Circuits brief the group on individual histories as well.

(Public Defenders; Larry Eger, Carlos Martinez, Matt Shirk, Marion Moorman, Kathleen Smith, James Purdy, Rick Parker, Administration Board Representative Montez Carter)
