



Office of the State Attorney Thirteenth Judicial Circuit

HILLSBOROUGH

Annual Community Report

2019

@SAO13TH



Safer, Stronger Hillsborough

Table of Contents

Mission 3

 Our Office by the Numbers4

 Message from State Attorney Andrew H. Warren5

Justice & Fairness

 Case Highlights.....6 – 9

 Policies & Programs.....10 – 11

 Conviction Review Unit12

 Juvenile Justice Reform.....13 – 14

 Treatment Courts.....15

 Victim Assistance Program.....16

 Hillsborough County Expungement Clinic17

Transparency & Community Engagement..... 18

 SAO Community Council19

 MacArthur Foundation: Community Conversation on Race & Prosecution20

 Community Engagement Task Force21 – 22

Legislative

 Amendment 4 & Victims' Rights.....23 – 24

Professional Development

 Training & Continuing Legal Education.....25

 Employee Recognition26



Mission

Building a safer community while promoting justice and fairness for everyone.

The Office of the State Attorney for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit is responsible for prosecuting all criminal violations of state law that occur throughout the Circuit, which encompasses all of Hillsborough County, including the incorporated cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City.



In addition to the primary responsibility of prosecuting criminal offenses, our office is actively involved in a variety of community organizations dedicated to preventing crime, reducing recidivism, and supporting victims. Our office also proactively engages in the community in order to improve communication, facilitate transparency, and promote trust with the citizens of Hillsborough County.

Safer, Stronger Hillsborough

OUR OFFICE BY THE NUMBERS

Led by State Attorney Andrew H. Warren, our office consists of 294 dedicated public servants, including 132 Assistant State Attorneys and 162 victim advocates, investigators, administrators, paralegals, receptionists, and other support staff. State Attorney Warren is a Florida Constitutional officer elected to a four-year term by Hillsborough County voters. It is our privilege to serve the 1.5 million residents in our county.



294
TOTAL
STAFF



132
ASSISTANT
STATE
ATTORNEYS

32
VICTIM
ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM
STAFF



A Message from State Attorney Andrew H. Warren

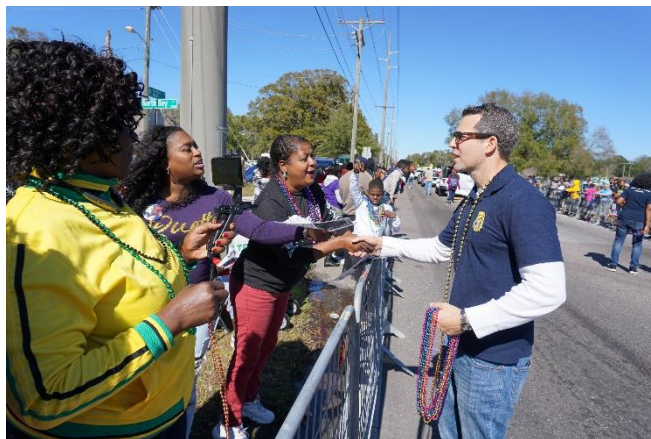


Dear friends,

Another year has come and gone, and I am excited to report on our success in 2019 as we continue to reshape our criminal justice system. We have spent the past three years fulfilling a new vision of criminal justice in our community—a vision based on a strategic, problem-solving approach to build a safer community while promoting justice and fairness for all. We remain focused on aggressively prosecuting criminals who threaten public safety. We are finding smarter approaches to steer low-level offenders away from the system. We are committed to working at the highest level of professionalism, integrity, and transparency, while proactively engaging with the community we are honored to serve.

It is impossible to capture the accomplishments of our office in a single report. From prosecuting cases to reducing recidivism to rehabilitating offenders to fighting for victims—every day our office is working to improve our criminal justice system in many ways. This report is merely a snapshot of our office's incredible work to strengthen our community.

In 2019, working with our criminal justice partner agencies, we expanded the Juvenile Arrest Avoidance Program (juvenile civil citations), which now includes family violence (e.g., sibling against sibling) as an eligible offense. We increased the use of our adult civil citation program to nearly 1,200 citations a year. We fought for constitutional rights for crime victims and implemented the requirements of the new constitutional amendment, known as Marsy's Law. Our jurisdiction continues to lead the way in providing support for victims of crime and ensuring their voices are an important part of the criminal justice process. We hosted three expungement clinics to help our fellow citizens move beyond past mistakes, including a special clinic for veterans.



We reached a critical milestone in our multi-year research project with Florida International University and the MacArthur Foundation, releasing a report regarding racial disparities in the criminal justice system, as we continue to develop a 21st century blueprint for measuring prosecutorial success beyond conviction and crime rates. After working with other partners for much of the year, we launched our plan to implement Amendment 4 to restore the right to vote to returning citizens for people who cannot afford to pay their outstanding court fines and fees.

Every milestone achieved reflects the hard work of our nearly 300 dedicated public servants and collaboration from our incredible partners in Hillsborough County. We are working tirelessly to advance our core mission of public safety by holding offenders accountable, protecting victims, ensuring transparency, and responsibly using taxpayer dollars. Thank you for your continued support of our work.

Sincerely,

Follow State Attorney Warren on social media:
@AndrewWarrenFL

JUSTICE & FAIRNESS

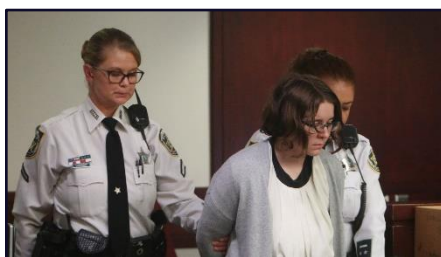
Bringing justice to victims and families in Hillsborough County.

CASE HIGHLIGHTS

Our prosecutors brought justice to thousands of families this year. We worked with witnesses and victims to protect the community from violent crimes and serious offenders. Every day, our prosecutors do extraordinary work in and out of the courtroom on an incredible scale – approximately 50,000 cases in 2019. The following highlights are just a few examples of the diligence and ingenuity of our ASAs and criminal justice partners to protect our community from dangerous criminals.



Former Tampa attorney, **David Whigham**, embezzled more than \$2 million from clients—many of whom were mentally and physically disabled. He was convicted and sentenced in April to 15 years in prison and ordered to pay more than \$2 million in restitution to his victims.



Nicole Nachtman was just 21 years old when she gunned down her mother and stepfather in their Carrollwood home. After a two-week trial in July, the jury rejected claims that she was insane at the time of the killings and convicted her of two counts of first-degree murder. Nachtman was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.



On August 10, 2017, **Amber Perera** was driving more than 100 mph while intoxicated when her car slammed into another car. She caused a chain reaction crash that killed three people and injured another. In October, she pleaded guilty to charges including DUI manslaughter, leaving the scene of a crash with death, reckless driving with serious injury, DUI with serious injury, and tampering with evidence. Perera was sentenced to 50 years in prison.



CASE HIGHLIGHTS:

PROSECUTING CRIME, PROTECTING VICTIMS

Ex-nanny **Marissa Mowry** had an illegal sexual relationship with an 11-year-old boy in her care. She later became pregnant with the boy's child. Mowry pleaded guilty to four counts of sexual battery on a victim less than 12 and eleven counts of sexual battery familial or custodial authority. In October, she was sentenced to 20 years in Florida State Prison followed by 10 years of sex offender probation.



Albert Lonzo Adams, owner of Soaring Paws, claimed to collect donations to help stray dogs find homes by flying them to rescues across the country. However, Adams used a significant portion of the donations to pay for non-business expenses such as alcohol, food, and other personal purchases. In October, Adams pleaded guilty to five felony charges and was sentenced to 10 years of probation, community service, and costs, fines and fees totaling more than \$20,000.



Darien Pease recruited a runaway 15-year-old victim and began a sexual relationship with her. He took pictures and videos of the underage victim and had sexual intercourse with her. Pease solicited the child for sexual activity over the internet and transported the victim to meet an adult male. In November, a jury convicted him of human trafficking for commercial sexual activity, lewd and lascivious battery, promotion of a sexual performance by a child, and child pornography. His sentencing hearing is pending.





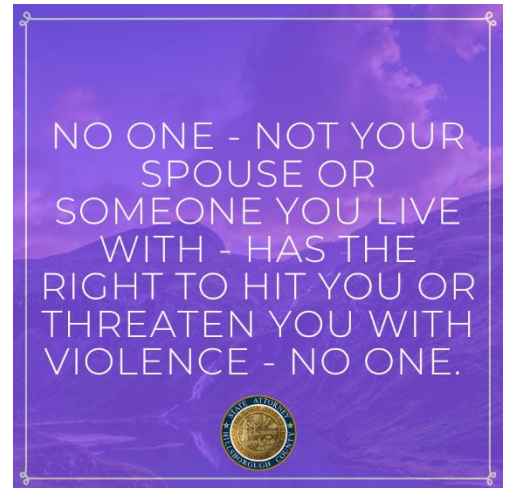
CASE HIGHLIGHTS: SEEKING JUSTICE

In November 2015, **Jonathan Kendrick** broke into 78-year-old Loretta Jackson's home and fatally beat her with her own vacuum cleaner. In August 2019, Kendrick was convicted of first-degree murder, armed burglary of a dwelling with battery, robbery with a deadly weapon, aggravated battery, and dealing in stolen property. He was sentenced to life in prison.



Ted Benjamin Grossman, a suspect in more than 10 armed robberies throughout Tampa and St. Petersburg, was convicted in two separate cases of armed robbery in Hillsborough County. On March 18, Grossman went to a Circle K gas station and pointed a black handgun at the store associate. He told the victim, "This is a robbery. You're being robbed," before fleeing with \$121 in cash. Early the next morning, Grossman went to another Circle K, pointed a gun at a victim, and once again demanded money — leaving with \$116 in cash. In light of his violent criminal history, Grossman was sentenced to 40 years in prison.

Lenton Chambers shot and killed his 35-year-old estranged wife, Evelyn Chambers, after a series of documented domestic violence-related incidents. Just before the murder, the defendant was seen on surveillance video clocking out of work wearing a white tank, gray shorts, and black sandals with a white stripe. When Chambers returned to work a short time after the homicide, he was wearing only socks. One sandal was left at the crime scene and later identified as Chambers' by both the victim's and defendant's daughters. In September, Chambers was convicted at trial of first-degree murder and was sentenced to life in prison.



Ricky Fitzgerald Hathorn bludgeoned Tommy Skeens to death, then raped and killed Lara Kuchar. In November, a jury convicted him of first-degree murder, second-degree murder with a weapon, and sexual battery in the brutal slayings of this homeless couple outside an abandoned car wash. A judge sentenced Hathorn to three concurrent life sentences.



CASE HIGHLIGHTS: SEEKING JUSTICE



*Photo credit: Tampa Bay Times (l to r) Temple Terrace Chief of Police Kenneth Albano and State Attorney Warren

Nine-year-old Felecia Williams went missing on May 16, 2014. The next day, her nude body was discovered on the causeway between Tampa and Clearwater. Temple Terrace Police worked quickly to develop a suspect —**Granville Ritchie**—the last person to see Felecia alive. After an exhaustive three-month investigation, Ritchie was charged with sexually assaulting and strangling Felecia to death.

Five years after her death, following a three-week trial in September 2019, a jury convicted Richie of first-degree murder, sexual battery, and aggravated child abuse. The jury was unanimous in its recommendation to sentence Ritchie to death for Felecia's murder.

"Ritchie's brutal murder of 9-year-old Felecia deserved society's harshest penalty. After securing justice for his crimes, we now turn our hearts and thoughts back to Felecia and her family."

- State Attorney Andrew H. Warren

JUSTICE & FAIRNESS

Policies & Programs

CONTINUING OUR COMMITMENT TO...

...Decriminalize Poverty

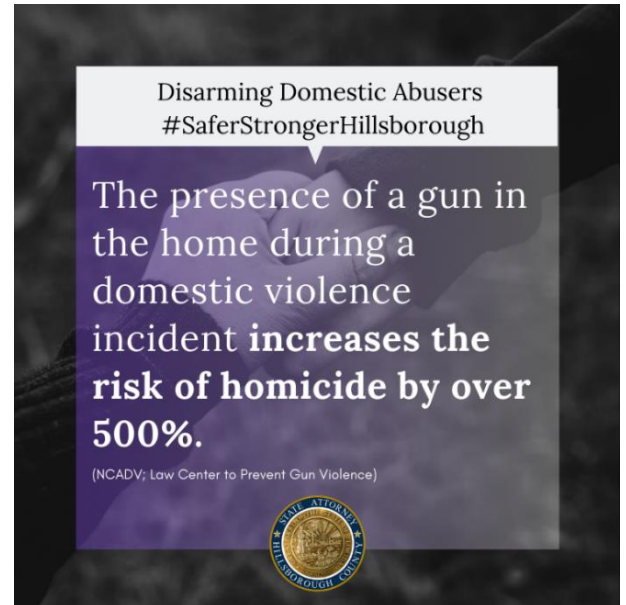
Since 2017, we have prioritized traffic safety when prosecuting offenders for **Driving with License Suspended (DWLS)** cases. Many license suspensions are unrelated to traffic safety but result from an inability to pay civil fines and fees. Consequently, many Floridians are trapped in a cycle of driving without a license to earn money to reinstate their license. This vicious cycle puts otherwise law-abiding citizens into the criminal justice system because of financial hardship, which is counterproductive, wasteful, and undermines public safety. Prosecution worsens the problem by imposing additional fines and threatening their job security. Our office is committed to increasing traffic safety by ensuring that drivers on our roads are properly licensed and insured. When drivers successfully regain their licenses, our office dismisses the charges, providing an added incentive for drivers to obtain a license while reducing the criminalization of poverty. Through our continued commitment to this approach, we have dismissed nearly 7,000 cases since 2017 because defendants regained their licenses. This year, approximately 41 percent of DWLS cases were resolved because a driver became licensed—an increase from only 4 percent in 2016. This tremendous increase has achieved safer roads, taxpayer savings, and compassion toward those struggling to make ends meet.



CONTINUING OUR COMMITMENT TO...

...Protect Victims

Our **Disarming Domestic Abusers (DDA)** initiative continues to be a crucial step in protecting victims of domestic violence. The deadly combination of domestic violence and firearms compels our commitment to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers. Florida law prohibits a person convicted of any domestic violence felony or misdemeanor, as well as anyone subject to a domestic violence restraining order, from purchasing or possessing any firearm or ammunition. Our law enforcement partners continue to collect information on scene which is used by our Assistant State Attorneys at first appearance court to seek forfeiture of any firearm as a condition of release on domestic violence cases. As we aim to streamline this process, defendants have been notified of the conditions and the process for surrendering firearms. As we look toward the future, we are working with our criminal justice partners to expand DDA to civil court when injunctions are first issued.



...Fight Drunk Driving by Changing Behavior

In 2017, we launched the **Reducing Impaired Driving Recidivism (RIDR)** program to reduce drunk driving by changing offenders' behavior. This program imposes enhanced sanctions on first-time, non-aggravated DUI offenses. Enhanced sanctions like ignition locks, alcohol monitoring devices, and DUI education programs have been shown to decrease impaired driving. Over the past 2.5 years, RIDR has proven extremely effective: recidivism rates are down, traffic safety is up, and we are prosecuting DUI cases more consistently and in a manner that allows first-time offenders an opportunity at rehabilitation. RIDR is just one example of how a problem-solving approach to criminal justice makes our community safer.



CONVICTION REVIEW UNIT

Ensuring justice for the wrongfully convicted



State Attorney Warren, Tampa Police Chief Brian Dugan, and CRU Attorney Teresa Hall announce plans to vacate 17 cases

In November 2018, we became only the second jurisdiction in Florida to establish a fully operational Conviction Review Unit (CRU)¹, a specialized unit to identify, remedy, and prevent wrongful convictions. By the end of 2019, the CRU had received 171 petitions. Additionally, in 2019, the CRU reviewed 225 closed cases in connection with three former police officers who were terminated for misconduct. Following an extensive investigation by the CRU and with input from its Independent Review Panel, our Office moved to vacate the 17 convictions, marking the first time in Hillsborough County history that a prosecutor-led investigation resulted in overturning convictions.

Our CRU also conducts trainings for Assistant State Attorneys to reduce the possibility of wrongful convictions. 2019 trainings included fingerprint analysis, expert witness testimony, implicit bias, and DNA evidence.

CRU GOALS

2019

- + Refine the review system of petitions and eradicate wrongful convictions in Hillsborough County.
- + Develop a comprehensive, step-by-step process for investigations of claims of wrongful convictions.
- + Increase community awareness surrounding the CRU.
- + Form partnerships with local law schools to create CRU internships.

2020

- + Continue legal education on issues that lead to wrongful convictions.
- + Develop internal processes for case review through sentinel events.
- + Cross train our office and our law enforcement partners on investigative and prosecutorial pitfalls common to wrongful convictions.

¹ The CRU Independent Review Panel consists of former Supreme Court Justice Peggy Quince, former State Attorney and appellate judge E.J. Salcines, and former appellate judge Chris Altenbernd.



State Attorney Warren visits juvenile detention center
with Tampa Bay Buccaneers

Reforming Juvenile Justice

What we believe

Our office is committed to reducing crime and recidivism while redirecting the path of kids who commit low-level offenses in our community. Every encounter youth have with the criminal justice system increases the likelihood of future interactions, and ultimately, the downward spiral into a life of crime as an adult. Kids should be treated like kids. Prosecuting juveniles as adults should be reserved for serious crimes that pose a threat to public safety – the worst, most violent, and chronic juvenile offenders. Our office is committed to changing the path of troubled youth to improve long-term public safety.

Breaking the cycle

For many years, Hillsborough County had one of the highest rates of juvenile offenders prosecuted as adults in Florida and in the country. At the beginning of his administration in 2017, State Attorney Warren committed to reducing the number of these juvenile direct files. Over the past three years, we have reduced juvenile direct files by 69 percent. This progress means that Hillsborough is no longer a state and national outlier in terms of charging kids as adults. More importantly, it allows us to hold youthful offenders accountable while minimizing the long-term risk to public safety associated with prosecuting juveniles in the adult system.



(Far right) Juvenile Chief Travis Coy
volunteers at Safe Summit 2019



Juvenile attorneys participate in mock trial
with area youth and Tampa Bay Buccaneers

**Juvenile direct files
down 69% since 2016**



In 2019, there were 37 jail bookings for juveniles 17 and under – down from 163 in 2016, a 77% reduction.

holds them accountable through a variety of sanctions while avoiding the long-term consequences of an arrest or conviction. The expanded program now covers family violence – battery against a parent or sibling – through partnership with Hillsborough County Children's Services to provide juveniles with counseling and academic services.

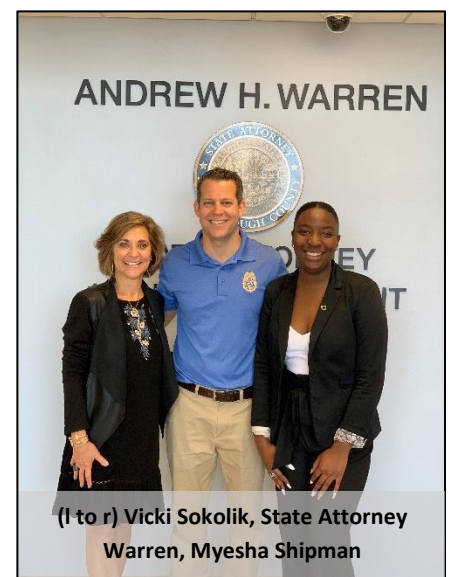
Juvenile Mental Health Court

Under the direction of Chief Judge Ronald Ficarotta and with other criminal justice stakeholders, we established a juvenile mental health court in January. This problem-solving court, a first-of-its-kind pilot program in Florida, provides the necessary access to treatment, consistent and intensive supervision, and academic and family support for young offenders with mental health issues.

Community Engagement and Mentorship

In January, State Attorney Warren offered an internship to Myesha Shipman, a senior at Jefferson High School. Shipman was featured in the [Tampa Bay Times Holiday Hopes](#) series where she expressed a desire to become a criminal attorney. Shipman's inspiring journey gives her a perspective to help us achieve justice, and her dedication and work ethic fit right in with our organizational culture.

We cannot achieve this work alone. Together, with the support of our criminal justice partners, we know that we are on the right path to become a model for juvenile justice reform across Florida and our entire country.

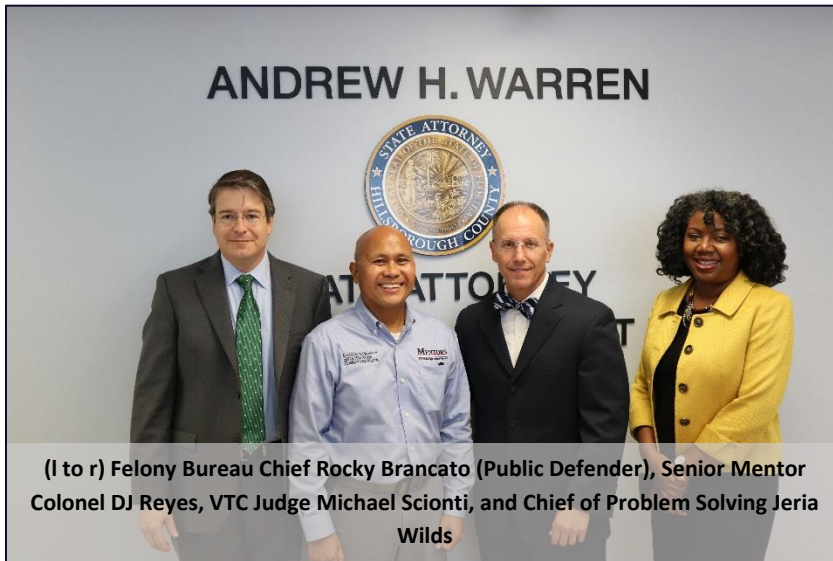


Juvenile Arrest Avoidance Program (Civil Citation)

In 2017, with law enforcement and other criminal justice partners, our office developed a juvenile pre-arrest diversion program, commonly referred to as juvenile civil citations, to mitigate the school to prison pipeline and bring Hillsborough County in line with state and national standards on juvenile justice reform.

Last April, county stakeholders announced an expansion of the program to include all but five misdemeanor offenses. Under this expansion, a greater number of first-time juvenile offenders can now participate in this probation-style diversion program that

PROBLEM SOLVING COURTS



Drug Court

This year, the Problem Solving Court Oversight Committee reached an important milestone by finalizing the use of the LS/CMI Risk Needs Responsivity tool in the Adult Drug Court. This validated assessment tool will allow the courts to consistently assess an individual's risk to reoffend. It will also help identify the specific needs of each individual, including mental health treatment, substance

abuse treatment, as well as employment and housing needs. Our office also attended the Florida Office of the State Court Administrator's training in Sarasota with the Hillsborough County drug court team. This training was critical for the upcoming Florida certification of the Adult Drug Court. The oversight committee also completed the Adult Drug Court handbook for each defendant, which includes the use of a five-phase system, incentives and sanctions, and use of medically assisted treatment for those addicted to opioids.

One of the many ways we employ a strategic problem-solving approach to criminal justice is through our treatment courts, commonly referred to as problem solving courts.

Mental Health Court

The Mental Health Court received a substantial grant from Hillsborough County that will allow the court to continue to treat defendants with significant mental illnesses. The Mental Health Court also applied for and received a grant that will begin mid-2020 to treat defendants who are not eligible for diversion. This expansion of the Mental Health Court for post-adjudication defendants is the most significant change since the Mental Health Court began in 2017.

Veterans Treatment Court

Hillsborough County is home to nearly 98,000 military veterans. In 2019, approximately 120 veterans graduated Veterans Treatment Court (VTC). Our VTC responds to the unique needs of the brave men and women who served this country by directly addressing issues affecting veterans who become involved in the criminal justice system. With the court infrastructure firmly in place, more veterans are being identified as suitable VTC candidates, and the stakeholders continue to seek additional legislative and grant funding to grow this program to meet the needs of all servicemen and servicewomen in our community. Our office, along with our criminal justice partners, are proud to be part of this successful and inspiring program.



VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

505,613 Victim Notifications

44,760 Victims Assisted

2,295 Court Escorts Provided

33 Community Presentations

In the aftermath of a crime, victims are left to cope with physical pain, psychological trauma, financial loss, and a criminal justice system that is confusing and overwhelming. The State Attorney's **Victim Assistance Program (VAP)** is devoted to advising victims of their rights under Florida law and supporting them and their families as they navigate the legal process. Our office offers a variety of services to help victims cope with the trauma and assist prosecutors in building and maintaining the needed rapport with victims in order to achieve justice on their behalf.

VAP also sponsored its annual food drive to support victims and their families yearlong, and it participated in community outreach events such as Are You Safe Purple Party, the Domestic Violence Task Force, MADD walk, Ryan's Run, National Night Out, area school and University of Tampa presentations, Tampa Bay Black Heritage Festival, the Victim Impact Panel, and the Service Providers Advocacy Network.

Victim Assistance Program
813-272-6472
victimassistance@sao13th.com

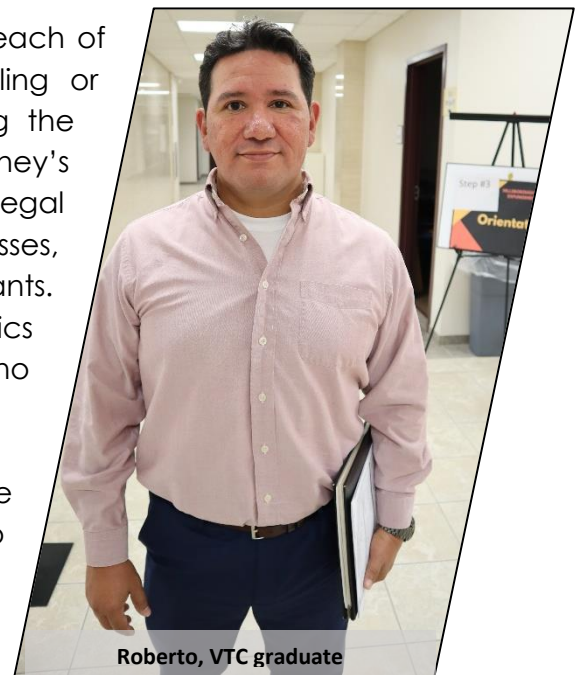
2019 Hillsborough County Expungement Clinic

Our office, in partnership with the Tampa Hillsborough Homeless Initiative (THHI) and Commission on the Status of Women (COSW), launched another successful series of expungement clinics to help people who were arrested or charged but not convicted clear their record.

Even if a person was not convicted of a crime, simply having been arrested or charged with a crime can make it hard to find or keep a job. To solve this problem, our office worked with community partners to help fellow citizens move beyond past mistakes.

We held three separate expungement clinics in 2019, each of which served as a one-stop-shop to apply for sealing or expungement of a person's criminal history, including the preparation of the application, review by the State Attorney's Office, notary services, and independent pro bono legal counsel. Additionally, the clinic offered free bus passes, health screenings, and voter registration for all participants. For Veterans Day, we held one of the three clinics specifically to help those brave men and women who served our country.

With support from our community partners, the three clinics provided critical services valued at \$700,000 to more than 200 participants at no cost to the participant; Hillsborough County is the only judicial circuit in Florida to hold these expungement clinics for free.



Roberto, VTC graduate

It was an honor to assist Roberto, retired Marines Corps, with his expungement application, which will allow him to pursue a career in cybersecurity. He is also a graduate of the Thirteenth Circuit Veterans Treatment Court.

Transparency & Community Engagement

We are committed to community engagement and the value it brings to the work we do in building a safer, stronger Hillsborough. This was a transformative year for engagement and transparency for our office. From celebrating our inaugural Community Council, hosting a series of successful expungement clinics, unveiling our groundbreaking racial disparities report, and redefining prosecutorial success in the 21st century, we continue to develop a significant presence in the dynamic and multi-faceted community that we serve. We will continue to work directly with Hillsborough residents and develop partnerships outside the courthouse to improve safety and promote fairness.



“Proactive engagement promotes accountability, helps implement effective policies, and increases public understanding about our criminal justice system.” - State Attorney Andrew H. Warren

SAO Community Council



In 2018, we launched a bold initiative to increase transparency and trust within the diverse communities we serve by introducing a Community Council, an advisory group to the State Attorney's Office. Of the 1.5 million people who call Hillsborough County home, many lack an awareness about our office and how the criminal justice system works. We set out to build a core group of ambassadors that included a cross-section of individuals with impressive records of civic engagement in Hillsborough County.

For two years, State Attorney Warren, ASAs, and staff have engaged in candid dialogue on criminal justice issues, addressed community concerns, and received feedback on our prosecutorial policies. Members of the Council met with an SAO representative every other month to gain a deeper understanding of our policies, programs, and initiatives. Launching a community council was one of several innovative steps taken to increase community engagement and transparency.

The following projects highlight the collaboration from the Council's two-year term:

- + **Updating Victim Assistance Program Brochures**
- + **DUI Community Mock Trial for High School Students**
- + **Youth Criminal Justice Contest**
- + **Victim Advocacy/Diversity Outreach in Wimauma**

We appreciate the SAO Community Council members and their dedication to improving our criminal justice system. Applications for the next SAO Community Council will be available on our website in February.

Redefining Prosecutorial Success in the 21st Century

In 2018, our office was selected as one of only four prosecutor's offices in the nation to participate in a \$1.7 million grant-funded project from MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge. This project aims to redefine how prosecutors evaluate the success of their offices, including: crime reduction; success of diversion programs; achieving consistency and fairness; minimizing racial disparities; the efficient use of prosecutorial resources; and supporting crime victims.

As part of the project, we opened our files to independent researchers from Florida International University (FIU) to evaluate 87,000 cases from 2017-2018. In December 2018, the FIU researchers published a report summarizing prosecutorial attitudes on different aspects of the criminal justice system, including measurements of success, office priorities, community engagement, and racial disparities.

In 2019, FIU researchers published a report analyzing racial disparities within our office. Although there are statistical differences in the treatment of different racial groups, the disparities outlined in the report are not glaring. Instead, they identify some areas where we need to take a closer look at why disparities exist and how we can address them. Beyond racial disparities, the report also provides valuable information about our prosecution and management of cases that will improve our efficiency and decision-making.

Vision 2020

In 2020, we expect the publication of the third and final report of the overall project, which will focus on the creation of a new blueprint for measuring prosecutorial success. Working with all four selected offices, researchers from FIU and Loyola University (Chicago) are developing "Prosecutorial Performance Indicators", a guide that will help offices capture and track data across a variety of priorities and objectives. We appreciate the MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge and FIU for supporting our efforts to develop more effective prosecutorial practices.



(l to r) State Attorney Warren, Ernest Hooper, Brian Butler, Rep. Fentrice Driskell, Clara Reynolds, Ella K. Coffee, DJJ Secretary Simone Marstiller at a town hall meeting in July discussing the MacArthur project



(l to r) ASA Matt Pruiett, Jinny Warren, and Geraldine Battle delivering diaper drive collection items for Jackson in Action Foundation

We continue to increase public awareness by deploying our SAO Community Engagement Task Force (CETF), an employee-led task force that finds meaningful opportunities to promote public safety and public engagement. The CETF is comprised of five committees which include: School Outreach, Strategic Partnerships, Charitable Outreach, Speakers' Bureau, and the Community Service Award which annually recognizes an employee for outstanding service and volunteerism. One of many CETF highlights this year includes A Day with the State Attorney featuring WWE Superstar Titus O'Neil and 200 local middle-school students, volunteering during the Metropolitan Ministries Holiday Tent, and Operation Diaper Drive, an office-wide collection drive to support military moms in Tampa.



A Day with the State Attorney: WWE Superstar Titus O'Neal and State Attorney Warren



ASA John Schinka speaking to youth at court juvenile diversion program



State Attorney Warren and staff attend
Safe Summit 2019



ASAs attend MLK Leadership Breakfast



ASA Stephanie Pizarro presents on hate crime
prosecution at U.S. Attorney's Office
"Protecting Places of Worship" event



Felony Bureau Chief Jill Hamel, ASA Nicki Mohr, and ASA
Suzy Lopez preparing for Strawberry Festival Parade

Increasing Engagement + Awareness

Legislative

Victims' Rights,
Voting Rights

Amendment 4

In November 2018, Floridians made history by overwhelmingly passing Amendment 4, a grassroots ballot initiative to restore the voting rights of Floridians with felony convictions (excluding murder and sexual offenses) after completing all the terms of their sentence. We are committed to implementing Amendment 4 in a non-discriminatory manner to ensure that one's financial status is not a basis to deny the right to vote.

PHOENIX BRIEFS

Politics & Law

Three Florida state attorneys trying to help felons vote, despite new FL law

By Mitch Perry - July 30, 2019



Hillsborough's smart move to honor Amendment 4 | Editorial



Tampa Bay Times
Published Jul. 5, 2019

In 2019, Florida lawmakers passed SB 7066, a new law regarding the restoration of voting rights, that interpreted Amendment 4 to require a returning citizen to have paid all outstanding fines and court costs resulting from the conviction prior to having voting rights restored. Consistent with Amendment 4 and SB 7066, our local jurisdiction developed a process to restore voting rights for returning citizens who demonstrate an inability to meet the financial terms of their sentence. Working together with the Hillsborough County Clerk of Courts, Office of the Public Defender, the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Administrative

Office of the Courts, and the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition ("FRRRC"), we created a process to ensure that the inability to pay outstanding court fines and fees is not a roadblock for anyone seeking to have voting rights restored. The process involves submitting an application to have voting rights restored, working with the FRRRC to determine eligibility, having the Public

Defender file a motion with the court, and finally having the court determine voting eligibility under Amendment 4.

We are committed to working with returning citizens and will, along with our partners on this project, continue to monitor any new laws or court rulings that may impact this process.

Victims' Rights

In 2019, we began revamping our Victim Assistance Program to improve our coordination with victims and respond to the recently enacted Victims' Rights Amendment, commonly referred to as Marsy's Law.

Prior to Marsy's Law taking effect, our team of dedicated public servants updated our



Hillsborough State Attorney's Office Ready to Implement New Victims' Rights Law

Tampa Bay Times
Published Nov. 5, 2019

OPINION

Marsy's Law makes a difference | Column

The constitutional amendment approved by voters last year rebalances the criminal justice system.

victim notification procedures and Victim Assistance Program resources to include the new constitutional rights, developed and scheduled trainings for our staff and system stakeholders, coordinated with partner agencies on how the requirements of the new law would affect their respective operations, and worked with local law enforcement agencies to provide information to victims within 24 hours of an arrest for first appearance court. In total, our office provided more than 500,000 victim notifications this year to ensure victims and their families had the opportunity to be heard during every prosecutorial step in their case. With the County Commission's help, we added four new victims' advocates to our Victim Assistance Program to meet the demands of this new law.



Professional Development

Our office remains committed to the highest professional and ethical standards. Last year, we continued to increase our civic outreach, professional development, and operational efficiencies. We expanded our prosecutorial training to keep Assistant State Attorneys current on legal developments and sharpen their advocacy skills. With help from the State Legislature, we raised salaries for all Assistant State Attorneys and staff (excluding the State Attorney) in order to retain our employees in a competitive legal market. To better serve victims, we added two counselors to our Victim Assistance Program.

We made structural improvements such as relocating the reception area and reworking our most commonly used waiting areas to better assist our Victim Assistance Program and Special Victims Unit. Our newly renovated jury auditorium allows us to hold office-wide meetings and specialized training, as well as to host outside organizations, including meetings with state and local law enforcement partners and mentor training for Veterans Treatment Court.

2019 SAO Continuing Legal Education Courses

We conducted the following trainings for Assistant State Attorneys and staff:

- Intro Physical Evidence
- Cross Examination
- Speedy Trial Issues
- Jail Call Training
- Arraignments
- Disposition Sheets
- Williams Rule Evidence
- Discovery Workshop
- Tech and Large Case Load
- Fingerprints
- Mental Health Issues: Brownbag
- Child Victim/Witnesses
- Jury Selection Strategies
- Competency, Dealing with Incompetent Defendants
- Use of Court Facility Dog
- ABOTA Seminar: Practicing with Ethics, Civility, and Professionalism
- Legislative Update
- Social Media/Electronic Evidence
- Federal and State Prosecutions
- Frye/Daubert-Use of Expert
- Implicit and Confirmation Bias
- Interstate Compact for Probation
- DNA 101
- Probation Mock Hearing
- Proper and Improper Impeachment

Employee Recognition

ASA John Terry Receives Bell/Childers Memorial Award



(l to r) Tampa Police Chief Brian Dugan, ASA John Terry,
State Attorney Warren

Congratulations to **ASA John Terry**, for receiving the 2019 Tampa Police Department Bell/Childers Memorial Award. The Bell/Childers Memorial Award honors two TPD law enforcement officers, Detectives Randy Bell and Ricky Childers, who lost their lives in the line of duty in 1998.

Assistant State Attorney Terry has been a prosecutor in Hillsborough County for more than 27 years. During his tenure, he has sought justice for countless victims and kept some of the county's

most dangerous predators off our streets. His exceptional prosecutorial work in a 2015 triple homicide garnered him this honor from law enforcement. A skillful courtroom advocate and litigator, ASA Terry consistently exhibits professionalism and passion for keeping our community safe, while showing empathy and support towards victims and their families.



(l to r) ASA Pam Dato, Estella Gray, Robin Thompson,
State Attorney Warren, Chief ASA Kim Hindman

The 2019 Community Service Award was given to **Robin Thompson**. For the past 10 years, she has visited residents in nursing homes and similar facilities to lift the spirits of the patients by singing to them and dancing with those who are physically able. She also donates supplies to these facilities when needed.



Carl Crowe receives gift from the
Florida West Central Credit Union

In 2019, **Carl Crowe** went above and beyond his daily job duties by managing multiple critical projects, such as assisting our MIS department in transitioning our office into a paperless work environment. Crowe also took on merging of the data entry department within the case processing department.

PLANT CITY OFFICE

301 N. MICHIGAN AVE., ROOM #1022

PLANT CITY, FL 33563

P: (813) 757-3890

F: (813) 276-8649

Office Hours: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

TAMPA OFFICE

419 N. PIERCE ST. TAMPA, FL 33602

P: (813) 272-5400

F: (813) 274-1976

Office Hours: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm



Stay Informed:

www.SAO13th.com

[@SAO13th](https://twitter.com/SAO13th)



#SaferStrongerHillsborough