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Delaware County Public Defender Office Earns Statewide Award

DELAWARE, Ohio — The Delaware County Public Defender Office has received the Office of the Ohio Public Defender's top award for its work protecting and advocating for the rights of indigent defendants.

At the 16th Annual County Public Defender Summit held Oct. 22-23, representatives from Delaware County received the Clara Shortridge Foltz Award, which recognizes those who have made a significant impact on indigent defense in Ohio. The award is named in honor of Clara Shortridge Foltz, the first female lawyer in the state of California who also opened the nation's first public defender office. Previous recipients have included the Toledo Legal Aid Society and public defenders from Allen County and Summit County.

Carlos Crawford, who heads the Delaware County Public Defender Office, said: "I am incredibly proud that our office has received the Clara Shortridge Foltz Award. This recognition reflects our team's unwavering dedication and commitment to ensuring justice for our clients. I thank everyone who has supported us along this journey as we continue to make a meaningful impact in our community."

The Delaware County Public Defender Commission was created in September 2020 by an act of the Delaware County Commissioners in consultation with the County's judges. The Public Defender Office was staffed and opened in March 2021 and provides legal representation for indigent defendants in the Delaware County judicial system. Crawford has headed the office since April 2022 and oversees a staff of six attorneys, one program administrator, one social worker and four administrative professionals. An additional attorney will be joining the office in November.

"It's truly extraordinary that an office that has been in operation for less than four years could receive the state's top award for public defender professionals," said Delaware County Commissioner Barb Lewis. "But this just speaks to the excellence of this team and their commitment to the rights of their clients."

For more information about the Delaware County Public Defender Office, please go to:
<https://publicdefender.co.delaware.oh.us/>.

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Attachment: Photo (L-R): Delaware County Public Defender Carlos Crawford, DCPDO staff members Leonard Williams, Tammy Thompson, Lauren Webb, Barshaunda Robinson, Jennifer Stamolis, intern Scott Huston, Garret Smith, Jenny Downey, Jeff Ulrich and Caleb Carson. Not pictured are: staff members Jordan Patton, Nick Barons and Elissa Sessley.

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