



ORLEANS PUBLIC DEFENDERS

2601 TULANE AVENUE – SUITE 700 • NEW ORLEANS, LA 70119
TELEPHONE: (504) 821-8101 • FAX: (504) 821-5285 • WWW.ORLEANSPUBLICDEFENDERS.ORG

News

April 19, 2011

Contact: Derwyn Bunton
(504) 224-0958

The Public Defender Corps has chosen the Orleans Public Defenders as a host site for its inaugural class of corps members. Only 18 attorneys across the country were chosen to participate in this program, which was started to help assist struggling public defender offices around the country.

“We are excited to be welcoming these dedicated individuals to our staff,” says Chief District Defender Derwyn Bunton. Corps members are funded through the Public Defender Corps Program and receive that funding for two years, similar to AmeriCorps programs across the country. “This is an opportunity to continue to provide high quality legal representation to our clients and community without an increased financial burden to the system.”

The Public Defender Corps says of its program, “Across the country, public defender offices are underfunded, understaffed, and drowning in untenable caseloads. With too few public defenders handling too many cases, those who cannot afford representation are being denied their fundamental right to counsel, and many are languishing in jail at taxpayers’ expense.” Michael Bradley, Deputy Chief Defender, agrees this describes the situation at OPD. “Being able to host attorneys through this program allows us to have more resources to uphold our mandate to ensure fairness in the criminal justice system.”

Mr. Bunton continues, “I will continue to seek out innovative solutions to provide quality legal representation to our community. Fairness and balance in the criminal justice system is my top priority.”