



Release

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STATE EMPLOYEES HONORED FOR INNOVATIVE IDEAS *Florida TaxWatch Honors Those Who Save Taxpayers Money*

Jacksonville — Florida TaxWatch recognized state employees from the Jacksonville area for their innovative and cost-saving ideas. Twenty-five winners were presented, individually and in teams, with awards at the **Prudential - Davis Productivity Awards Luncheon**, on **Monday, June 8 (noon – 1:30 p.m.) in Jacksonville at the Omni Hotel – Downtown, 245 Water St.**

The Prudential - Davis Productivity Awards program is a major government improvement initiative chaired by Lt. Governor Kottkamp, administered by Florida TaxWatch, and sponsored by Florida TaxWatch, The Florida Council of 100, and the State of Florida. Now celebrating its 21th Anniversary, the program recognizes and rewards (with cash awards of \$250 to \$2,750 plus commemorative plaques and certificates of commendation) state employees who clearly exceed their job descriptions and performance expectations in ways that improve service delivery and save money for Florida taxpayers.

“For 21 years, this award has recognized the importance of rewarding and replicating the cost saving innovations generated throughout Florida by state employees like you,” said the Lt. Governor speaking on the Prudential Davis Productivity Awards program. “On behalf of Governor Crist and the 19 million people who call Florida home, thank you for the exceptional work you do to improve the quality of life we all enjoy and for your dedication to our great state.”

The 2009 competition awarded 559 individual and team winners statewide for their innovations and productivity improvements worth \$342 million in cost savings, cost avoidances, and increased revenue for state government. The program saves even more money by working with agencies and government officials to replicate the cost-savings measures recognized and rewarded during the annual competition.

“It is important that cost-saving innovations generated by devoted state workers are recognized, rewarded, and replicated throughout Florida,” said David A. Smith, Chairman, CEO and President, PSS World Medical and Chairman of Florida TaxWatch. “In this way, we can assure the citizens of our great state that their government is operating as efficiently as possible in providing the high-quality services they deserve, at the lowest possible cost.”

“Now more than ever, it is necessary that the state government deliver services more efficiently and effectively; each of these award winners is a model of how we can improve government together,” said Dominic M. Calabro, President and CEO of Florida TaxWatch.

“These individuals bring honor to themselves and to state government”, said Florida House of Representatives Speaker Larry Cretul of the achievements of the award winners. “Their accomplishments in generating efficiencies, productivity, and savings set an example for us all. They deserve our recognition and reward for jobs well done.”

Some winners from Jacksonville who were honored at today’s luncheon include:

The Homeless Hotline Team

Department of Children and Families, Jacksonville

Notable Team Award (Cash Award and Commemorative Plaque)

This four-person team created a system that links operations with the Jacksonville community to identify, track, and correct assistance applications for more than 700 homeless clients, including those living in domestic violence shelters. This system's cost savings and increased revenue is an estimated \$750,000. Award Code: DCF-105

Reduced the Number of Children on Runaway Status

Department of Children & Families and Family Support Services of North Florida, Jacksonville

Notable Team Award (Cash Award and Commemorative Plaque)

This six-member team spearheaded changes in services to runaways and opened up communication between youth and the agencies that serve them, thereby helping reduce the number of children on runaway status by 74%, from 46 in June 2007 to 14 in September 2008. Strategies included implementing changes in group home activities to keep children busy, developing specialized foster homes to work with repeat runaways, implementing an incentive program for youth not to run, and most importantly listening to the youth on where they want to live or what would help them to stay in placement. Reduced time spent on child recovery was valued at \$115,000. Award Code: DCF-127

Developed Teleconferencing System for Remote Dental Examinations

Nassau County Health Department Dental Clinic, Yulee

Notable Team Award (Cash Award and Commemorative Plaque)

This eight-member team researched, acquired technology, and implemented a first-in-the-state system that enables dentists to perform remote, real-time exams on patients in another location using a teleconferencing system, digital radiograph system, and intraoral camera. This process saves dentist or patient travel costs, reduces no-shows, and facilitates preventative treatment at the remote facility. Award Code: DOH-50

Obtained Resources to Improve Health Care Quality

Duval County Health Department, Jacksonville

Notable Team Award (Cash Award and Commemorative Plaque)

This five-member team convened a group of community stakeholders from Northeast Florida to develop a grant application for a federal program to improve efficiency and quality of health care. Subsequently, the Jacksonville community was selected to receive up to \$15 million worth of incentive payments from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for physicians who use Electronic Health Records to report, and to help improve measures funding. The goal is to foster implementation and adoption of Electronic Health Records more broadly as effective vehicles for improving care and reducing costs related to chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. The adoption of Electronic Health Records improves efficiencies, reduces costs, improve safety and quality. Award Code: DOH-63

Implemented and Developed a Laboratory Information System

Susanne R. Crowe, Biological Administrator, Department of Health, Jacksonville

Notable Individual Award (Cash Award and Commemorative Plaque)

Susanne Crowe developed a lab information management system which provides the foundation for other states’ public health laboratories to develop similar systems. Her achievement enables Florida’s health departments to order laboratory tests on-line and receive results electronically, thereby avoiding mail delays. Electronic exchange of information results in the department’s Bureau of Laboratories having complete information for claims submission to insurance, Medicaid and Medicare, thereby increasing revenue by more than \$750,000. Award Code:DOH-155

Of the 32 awards given to 197 state employees from the Jacksonville area, 25 awards were represented to 79 state employees at the luncheon. All Jacksonville area award winning achievements, and those of many other extraordinary state workers from around Florida, are detailed in the **2009 Prudential - Davis**

Productivity Awards Magazine, distributed at the luncheon and available at www.FloridaTaxWatch.org/dpa. The attached file lists all 25 awards that were presented at the luncheon.

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Florida TaxWatch is a statewide, non-profit, non-partisan research institute that over its 29 year history has become widely recognized as the watchdog of citizens' hard-earned tax dollars. Its mission is to provide the citizens of Florida and public officials with high quality, independent research and education on government revenues, expenditures, taxation, public policies and programs and to increase the productivity and accountability of Florida state and local government. Its support comes from homeowners and retirees, small and large businesses, philanthropic foundations, and professional associations. On the web at www.FloridaTaxWatch.org.