



# **NEWS**

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**CONTACT:** Harvey Bennett  
Communications Director  
850-222-5052, ext. 16  
850-510-7185 (mobile)

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

**TALLAHASSEE** — Mr. Nom Crew worked for the Florida Department of Financial Services during most of his state career, and while he was there he played a crucial role in increasing the state's accounts receivable collections from \$240,741 in July 2005 to \$1.5 million in May 2006, when he passed away.

Crew went above and beyond his responsibility for collections and re-wrote database programs that helped significantly improve the accounts receivable sent to outside collection agencies. This can-do attitude that resulted in significant cost-savings to the State of Florida is why Norm was awarded a 2007 Prudential Financial - Davis Productivity Award at a luncheon today at Tallahassee's Civic Center.

And with that same giving and can-do attitude, Norm's wife Stephanie tearfully accepted his \$250 cash award for his innovativeness and said she will pass it along to a family friend who was recently injured in an accident that left her quadriplegic.

Norm Crew is one of forty-six individuals and teams from the Tallahassee area and Panhandle receiving recognition for a job well done and a handshake from Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp, Chair of the Prudential Financial - Davis Productivity Awards. Their achievements will be published in the "**2007 Prudential Financial - Davis Productivity Awards**" magazine, released at today's luncheon.

"Our state employees are one of Florida's most valuable resources. I'm proud to be a part of a program that helps encourage and reward the initiative and creativity of our state employees and promotes wise innovations that serve the people of Florida better," Lt. Governor Kottkamp told the audience of 750 state employees, their bosses and other dignitaries.

The Prudential Financial - Davis Productivity Awards program is a major government improvement initiative chaired by Lt. Governor Kottkamp and sponsored by Florida TaxWatch, The Florida Council of 100 and the State of Florida. Cash awards of \$250 to \$2,500 plus commemorative plaques and certificates of commendation are presented annually to state employees who clearly exceed their job descriptions and performance expectations in ways that improve service delivery and save money for Florida taxpayers and businesses.

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"The Prudential Financial - Davis Productivity Awards are proof that the State of Florida has some of the most creative and innovative minds working to save our taxpayers' dollars," said Mike Jennings, Vice President of Government Relations for Prudential Financial and Chairman of Florida TaxWatch. "They continually go above and beyond the call of duty, and I think it's extremely important to recognize that," said Jennings.

This year's awards magazine will include two new and noteworthy sections. One highlights achievements of significant technology advancements and the other showcases wellness innovations throughout state government.

"Our state government is continually challenged to deliver services more efficiently and effectively," said Dominic M. Calabro, President of Florida TaxWatch. "But Florida's state employees constantly rise to the occasion."

The 2007 competition awarded 490 winners statewide for their innovations and productivity improvements worth \$332 million in cost savings, cost avoidances and increased revenue for state government. Other winners from the Tallahassee area and the Panhandle who were honored at today's luncheon include:

**Liang Hsia, Traffic Engineering Office Project Administrator  
Department of Transportation, Tallahassee (*Outstanding Cash Award of \$2,500*)**

Liang Hsia managed a 20-month, Statewide SunGuide Software development project for installation in the department's 14 Transportation Management Centers plus three expressway authority operation centers, and numerous municipalities, in order to assure continuous operation of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) devices during hurricane evacuations throughout Florida. Previous software packages were not integrated, prohibiting center-to-center communications and each package had "bugs" that required significant manpower to overcome. The new package, which resolves these issues and costs, is being considered for deployment in other states.

Developing one statewide software package enabled the department and partnering agencies to avoid the cost of duplication. Additionally, there is a projected \$70 million return on investment for this \$10 million project, for potential total added value of \$120 million. The nominator wrote that an after-project analysis could show savings of nearly \$200 million due to ITS construction project benefits not presented in the nomination. For more information, please contact Pete Vega at (904) 360-5463 or peter.vega@dot.state.fl.us. (2007 DOT-051)

**Florida Shared School Resource Team  
Department of Law Enforcement, Tallahassee**

Public schools are required to conduct criminal record checks on contractors and their employees. Contractors working in multiple school districts formerly had to submit fingerprints and make payments for record checks in each school district where they work. A database now enables a contractor to present fingerprints in one district, which the appropriate school submits to the Department of Education for a criminal record check. Other schools where that contractor works may then access the database to view information. The time that contractors had to spend going to multiple school sites to have fingerprints taken was eliminated. For more information, please contact Martha Wright at (850) 410-8113 or marthawright@fdle.state.fl.us. (2007 FDLE-003)

**Jessica Lunsford Act Implementation Team  
Department of Law Enforcement, Department of Corrections, Office of the State Courts  
Administrator, Tallahassee**

Under a tight timeframe and despite delays caused by the 2005 hurricane season, this 249-member team from three agencies implemented the Jessica Lunsford Act re-registration project ahead of schedule and under the original projected budget. Due to the media spotlight on sexual offender and predator issues, workload of members of this team doubled, tripled, and in some cases increased almost 10-fold during this project between May 2005 and October 2006.

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Team members researched technologies to put in place several new or enhanced automated processes that provide biometric identification and automated information on sexual offenders, predators, high risk sex offenders, probationers and arrested criminals to criminal justice professionals. The re-registration system ensures offender identity through fingerprints, captures digital photos and electronic signatures, and updates information provided to law enforcement and the public in real-time.

With more than 30,000 registered sex offenders and predators living in Florida, it is imperative for law enforcement and citizens to have the most current information possible. Electronic re-registration helps achieve this goal. All arrests in Florida are automatically noticed to courts of record through the Judicial Inquiry System, enabling judges to obtain criminal histories on arrestees prior to their first appearance. For more information, please contact Linda Willis at (850) 410-8497 or [lindawillis@fdle.state.fl.us](mailto:lindawillis@fdle.state.fl.us). (2007 FDLE-006)

Prudential Financial is in its fourth year as Anchor Sponsor of the Davis Productivity Awards program. Their support is crucial for sustaining and growing this nationally unique initiative. Governor Charlie Crist and Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp have made leveraging the added value of award winning achievements by adapting them to other areas of state government a priority for building a more effective and efficient government. The Florida TaxWatch Adaptable Achievements on-line publication identifies more than 700 achievements from the past five years of winners that can create more than \$100 million worth of this added value within three years after full implementation.

Florida TaxWatch, The Council of 100, and the State of Florida will be honoring other award winners from across the state at regional luncheon ceremonies scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, June 12th – Tampa
- Wednesday, June 13th – Orlando
- Thursday, June 14th – Fort Lauderdale
- Monday, June 18th – Jacksonville
- Wednesday, June 20th – Gainesville

Since 1989, more than 12,000 individuals, teams, work units and partnerships have been honored for producing more than \$5.6 billion worth of added value.

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**MEDIA NOTE:** The “2007 Prudential Financial Davis Productivity Awards” magazine and the Adaptables magazine can be found online at [www.FloridaTaxWatch.org](http://www.FloridaTaxWatch.org) and at these links:

[2007 Prudential Financial - Davis Productivity Awards Magazine, June 2007](#)

[2007 Prudential Financial - Davis Productivity Adaptables Magazine, June 2007](#)

Florida TaxWatch is a statewide, non-profit, non-partisan research institute that over its 28 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 Government. On the web at [www.FloridaTaxWatch.org](http://www.FloridaTaxWatch.org).