



Wisconsin State Public Defender

315 N. Henry St. - 2nd Floor
PO Box 7923 Madison, WI 53707-7923
Office Number: 608-266-0087 / Fax Number: 608-267-0584
www.wisspd.org

Nicholas L. Chiarkas
State Public Defender

Kelli S. Thompson
Deputy State Public
Defender

**** PRESS RELEASE ****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
ISSUED: October 30, 2008
CONTACT: Randy Kraft (608) 267-3587

Wisconsin State Public Defender's Office To Receive Diversity Award

SPD Recognized for "Respectful Workplace" Program

(Madison) The Wisconsin State Public Defender's Office (SPD) will receive a 2008 Annual Diversity Award in recognition of its "Respectful Workplace" training program. The award ceremony is scheduled to take place at 3:00 p.m. on October 30, 2008 in the State Capitol's Senate Parlor. This is the SPD's 4th Diversity Award, with the agency receiving previous recognitions in 2007, 2005, and 2003.

SPD staff participated in the "Respectful Workplace" training program this past winter and spring. A primary goal of the program was to promote a positive work environment in the agency. By encouraging a more-welcoming and respectful place to work, the agency will excel in the retention of minority staff and, through word of mouth, recruitment as well. The program also included elements of harassment training.

State Public Defender Nicholas L. Chiarkas noted, "Our agency is honored to receive such an important recognition, and I'm especially proud that this occasion marks the 4th time we have received the award. It is a reflection of the agency's continuing commitment to expanding, strengthening, and retaining a diverse staff."

Jennifer Bias, the SPD's Administrative Action Officer, added, "We feel that the 'Respectful Workplace' training program fosters a greater respect and appreciation for the value of diversity in our staff. It also is a natural progression from the 'Bridges out of Poverty' and 'People in Crisis' programs that have previously been successfully presented to our staff."

The award is sponsored by the State Council on Affirmative Action and the State of Wisconsin's Office of State Employment Relations.

#30#

Wisconsin Forward Award Mastery Recipient