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## **Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Shawn Crane Elected Chief Judge**

CLEARWATER - Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Shawn Crane has been elected the chief judge of the Sixth Judicial Circuit.

The election took place Feb. 15, 2023. The new term begins July 1, 2023, and ends June 30, 2025. Chief Judge Anthony Rondolino currently holds the post.

The chief judge is constitutionally responsible for the administrative supervision of the courts and court staff within the sixth circuit, which serves almost 1.5 million residents in the two counties. Forty-five circuit judges and 24 county judges preside over court proceedings in seven locations and are supported by an administrative staff of approximately 235.



Judge Crane

Judge Crane began his legal career as an assistant state attorney with the Pinellas-Pasco State Attorney's Office. At one point, he was a division director, supervising more than 30 lawyers handling thousands of cases in county court. He has received the local Prosecutor of the Year Award, and, for his work educating prosecutors statewide, he received the Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association's Distinguished Faculty Award.

In 2001, Judge Crane was appointed a county judge, a role he fulfilled until he was appointed to the circuit bench in 2006. While assigned to the family law section, Judge Crane received recognition from Family Partnerships, a Pasco County visitation center, with the "You Make The Difference Award." In essence, he was recognized for "promoting healthy family values and striving to keep our children safe."

Judge Crane has presided over Pasco's Adult Drug Court since 2010. Drug court is a treatment and rehabilitation program for non-violent, felony drug offenders. And, recognizing the need to address the unique issues facing veterans, he has also presided over Pasco County's Veterans Treatment Court. These court-supervised programs offer an alternative to time behind bars, with support and treatment for substance abuse and mental health issues. Building on the success of these programs, the court was able to expand treatment court opportunities to those at risk of losing parental rights by instituting a Dependency Drug Court and Early Childhood Court.

These efforts did not go unrecognized. Judge Crane has received awards both locally and nationally for his efforts. Locally, he was presented with the Woman Lawyers of Pasco Judicial Professionalism Award; the first Community Partner Award by the Alliance for Substance Addiction Prevention (ASAP); and the the Clearwater Bar Association's John U. Bird Judicial Excellence Award for his professionalism, high standards of conduct and contributions, both in and out of the courtroom. Nationally, the Drug Free America Foundation, Inc. awarded Judge Crane the Moxie Award. More specifically, it granted the award to Judge Crane for his "courage to protect America's children from dangerous drugs." Judge Crane also helped start Pasco County's Drug Court Ambassadors Program (DCAP) where those in recovery speak to juveniles about the dangers of substance abuse. He also received the Wabash College, Fredrick J. Urbaska Civic Service Award.

Judge Crane has also been the administrative judge for Pasco County, and, in that capacity, he has been responsible for the operation of the court and its programs in Pasco County. In addition to the day-to-day operations, his duties have included compliance with the applicable Florida Supreme Court directives during the pandemic and working with other justice partners whenever a hurricane was on the horizon. Finally, Judge Crane has worked toward and is committed to the construction of a Central Pasco Justice Center on the Land O' Lakes Public Safety Campus next to the jail, to better serve the citizens of Pasco County.