

# Drug Education For Youth (DEFY)

## Program receives High Marks

The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office "DEFY" Program has been recognized as one of the premier DEFY sites in the nation. The program has been in existence in Jacksonville since 1998 and overall since 1996. There are ninety (90) sites nationwide and Jacksonville ranks in the top three.

DEFY is a Department of Justice sponsored program partnered with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, the United States Navy, and the Jacksonville Weed & Seed organization. It is a comprehensive and multi-phased prevention program for kids ages 9 to 12. DEFY deters at-risk behaviors by giving kids the tools they need to resist drugs, gangs and alcohol and

includes skill-based activities that help youth positively shape future. The leadership and life skills provided by DEFY include goal setting, team building, conflict resolution and decision-making.

Recently, other organizations have stepped up to partner with the program on a local level. For example, MAD DADS, MaliVai Washington Tennis n' Tutoring Foundation, Colonial Insurance Companies, United States Marine ROTC and the United States Army have all participated. Officer Ken Jefferson has been the leader of the program since September, 1999 and is credited for the program's turnaround and success. "It is a great testimony to the program when you have

the cooperation of so many entities" states Will Daniels of the United States Attorney's Office, Middle District of Florida. "Jefferson has ventured into the deep and has creatively developed a system that other sites have not yet developed." Because of that creativity, Jefferson has been called on numerous times to represent the Sheriff's Office and the Middle District of Florida as a guest speaker and subject matter expert in the area of leveraging funds and business partnerships.

More and more people in the Jacksonville community have become aware of what the DEFY Program is all about. Jefferson has appeared on television, radio and in the local newspaper several times over the past three years sending the message of hope in areas of the community that may feel that all hope is gone.

Each summer DEFY sponsors a summer training

camp program, DEFY Phase I, that lasts for six days. DEFY Phase II is a school year mentoring program that reinforces the training and education received in Phase 1. During the opening ceremony on July 15th of this year, Naval Station Mayport Commanding Officer Captain Matthew Schellhorn offered the children words of encouragement. "You are learning the same things the Navy teaches its sailors and junior officers discipline and leadership. You will be the future doctors, lawyers, teachers and commanding officers. I want each of you to do the very best you can this week and listen to your mentors," Schellhorn said.

"The week long summer leadership program was a huge success this year," stated Officer Jefferson. We received more support than ever from every aspect of the community and the Navy. We are extremely

pleased with the success of this program and the impact it has made on these children and their parents. During the month of October, the Jacksonville DEFY site will be participating in the opening ceremony of the Regional Crime Prevention Conference to be held in Daytona Beach, Florida. Jacksonville has been recognized by the U. S. Attorney's Office as one of the most progressive, innovative and productive sites for the past three years.

DEFY is currently in Phase II (mentoring phase) where the children are monitored all year long. Each month a workshop and field trip are conducted to further emphasize the teachings from Phase I. Officer Jefferson and his staff are always looking for volunteers to work as mentors. Interested persons should contact Officer Ken Jefferson at 384-8028 Monday - Friday at the Zone 5 substation.

### UNSOLVED MURDER

#### Anthony R. Thurman

This 18 year-old devoted son of Anne Johnson, was murdered on June 24, 1990, in the Murray Hill area of Jacksonville by a drive-by shooting



**CALL JSO AT 630-0500**

### UNSOLVED MURDER

#### Willie Clarence Coffee

...beloved son of Catherine and Arthur Jenkins, was murdered at 2016 E. Market St., in Jacksonville, on August 25, 1994. His wallet was stolen and, witnesses say, two persons left the scene in a light colored Hyundai.



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J. Charles Wilson, CPA

(904) 880-9301 • Fax (904) 880-9302 • Res (904) 287-2665  
3030 Hartley Road, Suite 120 • Jacksonville, FL 32257

## How to Contact us:

**PHONE**  
904-783-6312

**MAIL**  
6302 San Juan Ave.  
Jacksonville, FL 32210

**E-MAIL**  
justice@justicecoalition.org

**FAX**  
904-783-4172



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