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SPD Announces 2016 Award Recipients

Attorneys Jerry Buting & Dean Strang and Horizon High School to Receive SPD Board Award

Assistant State Public Defender Margaret Johnson & the SPD's Eau Claire Region to Receive Agency Awards

(Madison) The State Public Defender Board and the State Public Defender's Office (SPD) will honor its 2016 award recipients during a ceremony on November 17 at the SPD's annual conference.

The Public Defender Board will present its *2016 Eisenberg Award* to Horizon High School and Attorneys Jerry Buting and Dean Strang in recognition of their respective positive impacts on our criminal justice system. Horizon High School, located in Dane County, is an accredited high school serving students recovering from drug and alcohol addiction. The school combines traditional classroom instruction in a small therapeutic setting with a peer-supportive focus on counseling and other services to meet the individual needs of each student. Horizon first opened its doors in 2005 and can point to many success stories including graduates who have gone on to pursue a college education.

Following the release of the Netflix series *Making A Murderer*, Attorneys Dean Strang and Jerry Buting went on a worldwide tour, entitled *A Conversation on Justice*, to talk about the broader issues highlighted by the underlying criminal case. Attorneys Buting and Strang have focused their attention on the Wisconsin justice system and specifically on the importance of increasing the state's private bar reimbursement rate. Both attorneys accepted SPD appointments in the past, and Attorney Buting is a former staff attorney.

"The Public Defender Board is pleased to highlight the work of Attorneys Jerry Buting and Dean Strang and Dane County's Horizon High School with this year's Eisenberg Award. Our recipients have had an impact on their respective areas: Horizon High

School on students trying to keep their sights on education while recovering from addiction, and Jerry and Dean who have helped educate others on the needs of Wisconsin's justice system," noted Public Defender Board Chair Daniel Berkos.

Staff attorney Margaret Johnson and the agency's Eau Claire Region will also be honored. Attorney Johnson was selected to receive the SPD's *2016 Chiarkas Award* in recognition of her leadership efforts with the issue of racial disparities and with the juvenile justice practices in Racine County. The staff of the Eau Claire Region, comprising the offices of Barron, Eau Claire, and Hudson, will receive the agency's *2016 Rubin Society Award* in recognition of the region's contributions to community outreach.

Wisconsin State Public Defender Kelli Thompson, added, "I congratulate Margaret for her leadership on a number of issues including racial disparities, and on the staff of our Eau Claire Region for finding the time to connect with our communities."

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