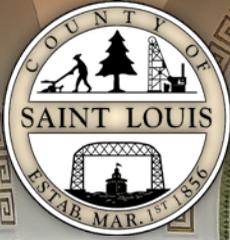


# ST. LOUIS COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



## PUBLIC SERVICE WITH A PURPOSE



**Duluth Courthouse**  
100 N. 5th Ave. W., #501  
Duluth, MN 55802  
(218) 726-2323

**Govt. Services Center**  
320 W. 2nd Street, #403  
Duluth, MN 55802  
(218) 726-2034

**Virginia Courthouse**  
300 S. 5th Ave., #222  
Virginia, MN 55792  
(218) 749-7101

**Hibbing Courthouse**  
1810 12th Ave. E., #107  
Hibbing, MN 55746  
(218) 262-0158

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## Board of County Commissioners

- 1<sup>st</sup> District:** Frank Jewell
- 2<sup>nd</sup> District:** Patrick Boyle
- 3<sup>rd</sup> District:** Beth Olson
- 4<sup>th</sup> District:** Tom Rukavina
- 5<sup>th</sup> District:** Pete Stauber
- 6<sup>th</sup> District:** Keith Nelson
- 7<sup>th</sup> District:** Mike Jugovich

**County Administrator**  
Kevin Gray

## Nate Stumme Award

The Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault selected Assistant St. Louis County Attorney Nate Stumme for his dedicated work on behalf of survivors of sexual assault and was given the “PAVSA Community Ally Award”. This award is presented annually to individuals who have demonstrated a strong commitment to PAVSA’s work to eliminate sexual violence.



In addition to his work in the courtroom, Stumme has long been a member of PAVSA’s Sexual Assault Multi-disciplinary Action Response Team (SMART) where he works with representatives from law enforcement, advocacy and the medical community to ensure that all of PAVSA’s policies and protocols are victim-centered. Stumme has also played a significant role in the development and implementation of PAVSA’s Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) project, a joint effort of the Duluth Police Department and PAVSA.



## Opioid Press Conference



St. Louis County Attorney Mark Rubin speaks at a joint press conference on November 30, 2017, with County Attorneys from Hennepin, Ramsey, Mower, and Washington Counties about the growing crisis of dangerous opioid addiction. The conference was held to announce civil action being taken by Minnesota Counties and County Attorneys against manufacturers and distributors of opiate-based pain medication.

The St. Louis County Board on Nov. 14 unanimously approved a resolution authorizing the County Attorney to commence litigation against pharmaceutical opioid manufacturers and distributors and other parties involved in the opioid epidemic.

## Letter from Your St. Louis County Attorney



My fellow citizens, a lot of people ask me what does the County Attorney do? After about eight years in office, and almost 40 years of working as a prosecutor, the answer depends on the day. I had one day recently that is a good example. The following is a peek at what this job involves.

First thing in the morning, I was briefed by Gary Bjorklund, our Criminal Division Head in Duluth on a couple of new matters. Both cases needed to address conflicts of interest and potentially secure outside counsel. This briefing was followed by a meeting with County Administrator Kevin Gray, Deputy County Administrator Brian Fritsinger, and Civil Division Head Kim Maki regarding upcoming County Board agenda matters. The issues ranged from statutory to constitutional interpretations.

Next, I was briefed by Assistant St. Louis County Attorney Nick Campanario in our Civil Division on our final stages of preparation of the opioid lawsuit we are bringing on behalf of St. Louis County. This was followed by two separate phone interviews. The first was with a reporter from the New York Times. This reporter had been following a Hibbing case where a woman gave her partner the contents of her fentanyl patch, with the result being the partner overdosed and died. She received a sentence of 48 months

in prison for a plea to the charge of Manslaughter in the Second Degree. The second call was with a gentleman from Canada regarding sex trafficking and cases from the 1980s involving sailors in the Duluth Harbor where children were being brought to the boats by family members for sex trafficking purposes.

Then, I received a written notice confirming a resignation from one of our attorneys who was leaving due to relocation and the opportunity for new employment in the Twin Cities. Due to this, I met with our Office Administrator Wade Backstrom, to make preparations on filling the vacant position. These preparations involved reviewing previously filed resumes and a discussion with Jessica Fralich, our Range Criminal Division Head, regarding how extensively we should advertise the vacant position.

I received another phone call from an individual who informed me he was going to be a candidate for elective office in St. Louis County. He inquired about the laws regarding candidacy for an elected office while still in employment status for the County.

At this point I had hoped to take a short lunch break, but instead received a phone call from a Commissioner that involved matters that were expected to come up at the next County Board meeting.

After this, Wade Backstrom and I met to discuss the progress and layout of our annual report. Toward the end of the day, with the assistance of Rebekka Stumme, one of our prosecutors, Wade Backstrom and I assisted in the preparation of a press release for the sentencing in a case involving a tragic criminal vehicular homicide incident where the 19-year old driver was sentenced to 41 months in prison.

Lastly, I had a discussion with Ben Stromberg, our PHS Division Head, regarding the increase in CHIPS cases and the reallocation of our attorneys to address the increased workload.

This is not everything that happened during the day, but certainly a snapshot of the variety of matters that come to my attention as County Attorney.

I am sure I am not alone when I have days thinking whether or not what I do, with the help of our incredible staff, really makes a difference. I believe with all my heart that what we do does matter, and I know I speak for my staff when I tell you that they share that same fire. It is in this spirit that I have selected the words of the late Robert F. Kennedy to grace our back cover and provide the hope and inspiration that all of us need to carry on and do the work that we do.

In this spirit, thank you again for the opportunity to be of service to you and thank you to my incredible staff for the work that they do ... daily, sending out "ripples of hope".

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Rubin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

**Mark Rubin**  
St. Louis County Attorney



**Benjamin Stromberg**  
PHHS Division Head

**Duluth Office:**

Jennifer Barry  
Joseph Fischer  
Sara Jankofsky  
Amy Lukasavitz  
Clarissa McDonald  
Patricia Shaffer  
Angie Shambour

**Virginia Office:**

Renae Darland  
Leah Stauber

**Hibbing Office:**

Gayle Goff  
Stacey Sundquist

**Investigators:**

Katherine Finc  
William Klein  
Shawn Laine

## Public Health & Human Services Division

As previously noted, roughly three years ago following a series of high-profile failures of the child protection system elsewhere in the state, nearly every aspect of the child protection system has seen dramatic changes which has resulted in significantly more cases being brought to court. These systemic changes, coupled with the explosion of the opioid epidemic, have resulted in significant changes to the workloads of PHHS attorneys.

By way of illustration, there are presently 12 attorneys (11.8 FTE's) in the three PHHS Division offices. Several years ago, four division attorneys were assigned to child protection work. As of 2017, however, eight of 12 division attorneys spend a majority of their time handling child protection matters. In addition, three of the four remaining attorneys also carry a child protection caseload, meaning 11 of 12 division attorneys are routinely doing child protection work.

In addition to more work on the child protection side, the burgeoning chemical dependency and mental health issues in the county have resulted in roughly a 50 percent increase in civil commitment matters over the past five years. This increase, which is being experienced statewide, has coincided with statutory changes mandating expeditious treatment of civilly committed individuals but without any corresponding increase in the resources available to address these needs. Once again, this is resulting in more work for the attorneys and staff in this office. Being able to absorb these significant increases within the confines of our current staffing model was the most significant accomplishment of 2017.

Early in the 2016-2017 school year, the Duluth Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) coordinated by Lutheran Social Services disbanded due to lack of funding. Recognizing that the absence of SARB would likely lead to dozens, if not hundreds, of truancy matters being referred directly to court, the PHHS Division of the County Attorney's Office, in partnership with the Human Services Department, Arrowhead Regional Corrections, Men as Peacemakers, and local school districts, began administering the SARB program. During the 2016-2017 school year, the reconstituted SARB worked with 99 families from eight schools. The overwhelming majority of cases were able to be resolved short of going to court through the provision of services, including 54 kids with truancy issues completing diversion classes with Men as Peacemakers or at Lincoln Park School.

Building on that success, the program has expanded for the 2017-2018 school year, having already worked with 75 families, (through November), from 16 schools with only nine of those cases going to court. Thirty-three kids have already completed diversion classes which are now offered by Men as Peacemakers at three area schools.

Finally, recent changes in the processing of Medical Assistance estate recovery claims by both Human Services and the PHHS Division of the County Attorney's Office, resulted in the recovery of \$1.5 million dollars by St. Louis County in the first nine months of 2017. This amount is the third highest of any county in the state (behind only Hennepin and Ramsey).


**Kim Maki**

Civil Division Head

**Duluth Office:**

Nick Campanario  
 Jim Nephew  
 Nora Sandstad  
 Thomas Stanley  
 Timothy Tysdal

## Civil Division

While the work of the Civil Division of the County Attorney's Office occurs largely behind the scenes, the results of the work improve the quality of life in St. Louis County by ensuring that administrative and departmental practices are well-reasoned, based upon thorough legal analysis, and beneficial to both the county and its citizens.

Significant projects undertaken by the Civil Division in 2017 include the provision of legal counsel relative to the county's sale of approximately 1,500 acres of tax forfeited land to the Fond du Lac Band for a purchase price of over \$1 million and the continuation of governmental oversight of a large wetland bank development, which will allow for increased economic development in the county.

Although large projects comprise a considerable amount of the Civil Division's workload, most of the attorneys' time is devoted to the daily interaction with county departments. For example, in 2017, the Civil Division worked with the Environmental Services and Planning and Zoning Departments to protect and preserve the natural environment by continuing to enforce the county's Septic, Solid Waste, and Zoning Ordinances. Additionally, the Civil Division promoted public safety by providing legal advice and services to the County Sheriff's Office and Arrowhead Regional Corrections, as well as, handling forfeitures of vehicles by repeat drunk drivers, firearms by violent offenders, and illegal profits and other resources by drug dealers. The Civil Division also provided legal advice and services to the Land and Minerals and Public Works Departments, ensuring effective management of public lands, roads, and bridges under the county's jurisdiction. Furthermore, the Civil Division provided counsel to County Administration and the Auditor's Office to help ensure that the county government was being operated in an efficient, legally sound, and fiscally prudent manner.

In addition, the Civil Division fields general inquiries from the public regarding issues ranging from data requests to property questions. The Civil Division also reviews nearly every contract that is entered by the county; this past year, the county entered approximately 800 contracts in furtherance of its business and operations.

Finally, the Civil Division was instrumental in the resolution of several significant court cases, the handling of dozens of property tax appeals, and the completion of nearly 100 voter fraud investigations stemming from the 2016 election.

The members of the Civil Division strive to do their work in a manner that ensures the county operates smoothly. In doing so, the Civil Division aids the county in achieving its mission of promoting health and safety, ensuring sound infrastructure, embracing the county's natural resources, and supporting an environment where communities prosper.



**Gary Bjorklund**

Criminal Division Head - Duluth

**Duluth Office:**

- Jon Holets
- Korey Horn
- Chris Pinkert
- Nate Stumme
- Rebekka Stumme
- Kristen Swanson
- Vicky Wanta

## Criminal Division/Duluth

The Criminal Division in Duluth prosecuted 2,018 cases in 2017. This includes 1,359 felonies, 459 gross misdemeanors, and 200 misdemeanor cases. These cases included 8 homicides, 44 sexual assault cases, 190 domestic assault cases, an additional 152 assault cases and 355 felony drug cases. In August, a grand jury was convened in Duluth where First-Degree Murder indictments were obtained against three defendants involving the death of a 22-year old college student.

Criminal prosecutors are also members of several multi-disciplinary teams and team members for several specialty courts. The multi-disciplinary teams include: First Witness, PAVSA, DVRT (Domestic Violence Response Team), and DVRC (Domestic Violence Restorative Circle). The specialty courts include the Southern St. Louis County Drug Court, the Southern St. Louis County DWI Court, and the Southern St. Louis County Mental Health Court. This past year the St. Louis County Attorney's Office, along with other stakeholders, started the Southern St. Louis County Veterans' Court. Criminal prosecutors work closely with other members of the specialty courts to assure the newest and best practices are used in dealing with difficult offenders. The specialty courts are considered some of the most successful specialty courts in the nation and are model courts which other specialty courts routinely visit to learn the newest and best practices.

Prosecutors also provided 100 hours of training to numerous stakeholders in the Criminal Justice System this year. Training was provided to law enforcement officers, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE), sexual assault advocates, and corrections officers.

This past year the St. Louis County Attorney's Office successfully applied for and received a grant for a new full-time victim/witness advocate position. In addition to enhancing the services to victims already being served by our office, the goal is for the grant-funded victim/witness position to be used to develop a program to reach out to our partners in the Criminal Justice System to provide services to victims who may have been neglected in the past.

The Minnesota Judiciary has a goal of having criminal cases being resolved within one year. The St. Louis County Attorney's Office met the Judiciary, Court Administration, defense attorneys, and other stakeholders to develop a new court calendaring system to help all cases make it through the court system more quickly and efficiently. The new court calendar will be implemented starting May 1, 2018.



**Patty Wheeler**

Victim/Witness Director

**Duluth Office:**

- Anne Fisk
- Lori Ulvi

**Virgina Office:**

Michael O'Bryan

**Hibbing Office:**

Elaine Lee

**Duluth Adult Division**

218-726-2323  
1-800-450-9777, Ext. 2323

**Duluth Juvenile Division**

218-726-2034  
1-800-450-9777, Ext. 8158

**Hibbing**

218-262-0158  
1-800-450-9777, Ext. 8158

**Virginia**

218-749-7101  
1-800-450-9777, Ext. 7101

## Criminal Division/Iron Range



### Jessica Fralich

Criminal Division Head - Range

### Virginia Office:

Sharon Chadwick  
Karl Sundquist  
Bonnie Thayer

### Hibbing Office:

Carly Melin  
Jeff Vlatkovich

Assistant St. Louis County Attorney Jessica Fralich took over as the Division Head for the Iron Range in October, 2017. Fralich replaced Michelle Anderson who was appointed to the bench by Governor Dayton.

The Iron Range Criminal Division prosecuted 1,451 cases in 2017. This includes 782 felonies, 361 gross misdemeanors, 226 misdemeanors, and 82 petty misdemeanors. These cases included 4 homicides, 2 attempted homicides, 39 sexual assault cases, 134 domestic assault cases, an additional 88 assault cases, and 346 felony drug cases.

Prosecutors recognize the best way to achieve offender accountability is by development and maintenance of partnerships with criminal justice stakeholders. As such, prosecutors have continued their membership on several multi-disciplinary teams and specialty courts including: The Sexual Assault Response Team of Northern St. Louis County, the Range Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence, and the Range Treatment Court. In addition, prosecutors are currently part of a multi-disciplinary team focused on the development of a formal Range Mental Health Specialty Court. This court would provide additional services and opportunities to mentally ill individuals who find themselves enmeshed in the criminal justice system.

Community safety and service is a goal of the prosecutors in the Iron Range Criminal Division. Many prosecutors serve their local communities by sitting on non-profit boards and participating in civic organizations. These include the local treatment centers, law enforcement advisory boards, the United Way, the Mesabi Humane Society, and other local organizations across the Iron Range. Iron Range prosecutors endeavor to communicate openly within the community regarding issues effecting members. To that end, prosecutors have sat on various panels regarding community topics such as opioid addiction.

Prosecutors attend local community awareness meetings and provide support to law enforcement agencies. In 2017, prosecutors continued their commitment to training for local law enforcement and students. Training included topics related to criminal justice including new laws, investigation of domestic violence, testifying in court, and 4th amendment issues. Prosecutors also were involved in the 2017 "Bring Your Child To Work" event in the Virginia Courthouse. This included participating in a mock trial, with the defendant being Cruella Deville, to allow children to observe an example of the criminal justice system at work.

In 2017, the Iron Range continued to see an influx of methamphetamine use coupled with an increase in heroin and opioid use. Methamphetamine continues to be the controlled substance with the highest level of intervention. The Lake Superior Drug and Violent Crime Task Force continues to focus its efforts in the investigation and eradication of these drugs and, the prosecutors on the Iron Range have been successful in seeing those cases to conviction. Substantial amounts of illicit substances and firearms have been removed from the hands of these offenders as a result.

Prosecutors have been successful, as well, in resolving several violent crimes including two co-defendants in a second degree murder, a manslaughter case involving the illicit transfer of a fentanyl patch, and several criminal sexual conduct cases. Also, a 28 year old male was convicted for the kidnapping and assault of a five-year old female which resulted in a 12 year prison sentence.

## Victim/Witness Division

The goals of the Victim-Witness Services Division of the County Attorney's Office are to help ease the physical, emotional, and financial hardships caused by criminal victimization. With our office providing comprehensive services to victims of and witnesses to crime, our goal is to also help reduce the confusion and inconvenience that may be caused by involvement in the criminal justice system.

Patty Wheeler supervises the Victim-Witness staff that works out of the St. Louis County Courthouses in Duluth, Hibbing and Virginia, as well as the Government Services Center in Duluth.

### QUESTIONS & CONCERNS

If you do not understand your rights or have questions or concerns, please call one of the numbers to the left and someone will help you.

# Administration and Initiatives

## Wade Backstrom

Office Administrator

## Tara Haynes

Victim-Witness and  
Special Projects  
Coordinator

## Duluth Courthouse Office:

Yvonne Kalin, Supervisor  
Tammera Bastie  
Betty Christenson  
Alaisa Knowlton  
Rachel Lambert  
Corrie O'Neill  
Sue Peterson  
Tiffany Peterson  
Angel Ricker  
Teresa White  
Chynthia Zuk

## Duluth Government

### Services Office:

Diane Lundberg, Supervisor  
Jackie Calvert  
Diane Eck  
Janessa Jurek  
Laura Picconatto  
Tianna Zembo

## Virginia Office:

Alaina Denny, Supervisor  
Patti Everson  
Sunnie Hardy  
Julie Larson  
Candy Nelson  
Tammy Sunsdahl

## Hibbing Office:

Alaina Denny, Supervisor  
Char Meinzer  
Marla Padgett  
Rachael Turk



## Administration

Wade Backstrom leads the 27-member Administrative Division of the St. Louis County Attorney's Office and is responsible for planning and executing a comprehensive range of administrative duties in support of the office's mission. Responsibilities include human resource management, technology, and information systems management. Principal among these duties is the preparation and execution of the Attorney's Office \$8 million annual budget.

Three clerical supervisors, Yvonne Kalin, Diane Lundberg, and Alaina Denny supervise highly skilled clerical teams in Duluth, Hibbing and Virginia, and are responsible for the maintenance of the case management system of the office. Their responsibilities include the preparation of statistical reports for office use

and mandatory monthly and annual reports for St. Louis County Administration, the County Board, State of Minnesota, and the United States.

## Initiatives

In August of 2017, the St. Louis County Attorney's Office applied for the Prosecutorial Service to Crime Victims' grant and was awarded a \$280,000 two-year grant in October of 2017. This grant is made possible by the U.S. Department of Justice Federal Victims of Crime Act, in conjunction with the Minnesota Office of Justice Programs, which is funded by the collection of federal fines and fees (not taxpayer dollars).

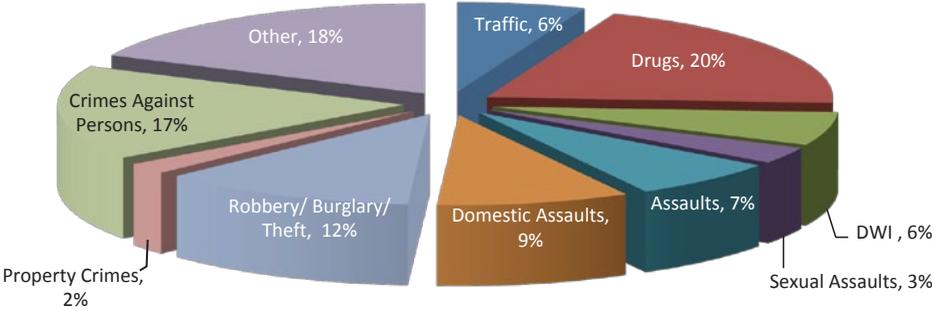
The Prosecutorial Service to Crime Victims' grant provides additional resources to increase the level of service to victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, and other forms of personal victimization.

In December of 2017, St. Louis County Attorney's Office hired Tara Haynes as the Victim-Witness and Special Projects Coordinator to implement the grant. Ms. Haynes comes to our office with over 12 years of experience working within our partner non-profit agencies collaborating with law enforcement and criminal justice professionals. She previously worked at Safe Haven Shelter and Resource Center as a Women's Advocate and also as their Legal/Community advocate. In the last five years, Ms. Haynes was employed with the Domestic Abuse Intervention program and assisted Duluth's criminal justice agencies in adapting and implementing the Blueprint for Safety Initiative which incorporated policy adoption pulled from 30 years of best practices with domestic violence cases. She also partnered with PAVSA on a grant around the co-occurrence of sexual abuse and domestic violence within the Domestic Violence Response Team at the Duluth Police Department and has worked closely with American Indian Community Housing Organization.

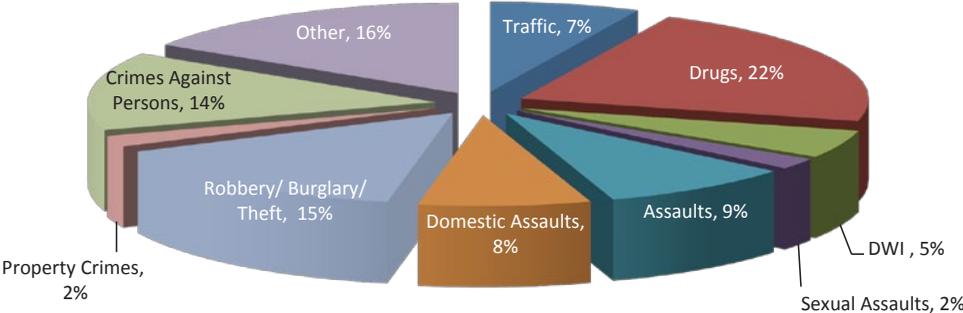
To best utilize the grant our office started out with an audit to understand the current practices when working with victims and to identify gaps in all four physical locations of the County Attorney's Office in Duluth, Hibbing and Virginia. The audit process included direct observation and interviews of Legal Secretaries, Victim-Witness Staff and Attorneys. Analysis included how practitioners preserve and document information that reflects we are meeting our statutory obligations of notification to crime victims, but also engaging them in the criminal justice process to create safer interventions. Additionally, Haynes has been working with our collaborative non-profit agencies to get feedback regarding how the County Attorney's Office is engaging victims and how we can better serve victims together.

# Percent of Adult Referrals by Crime Type

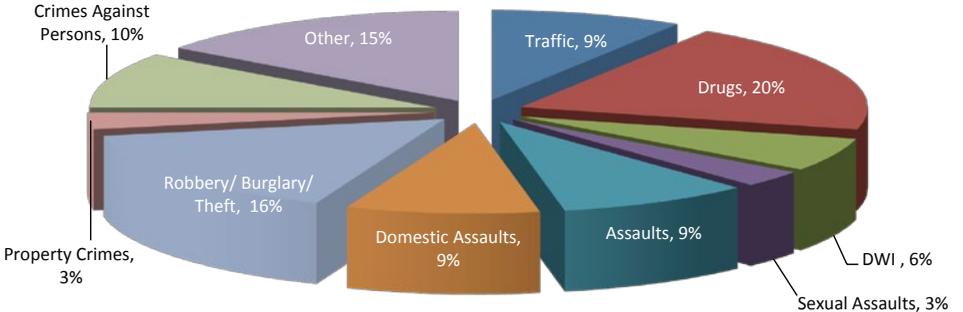
### Adult Referrals By Crime Type 2017



### Adult Referrals By Crime Type 2016

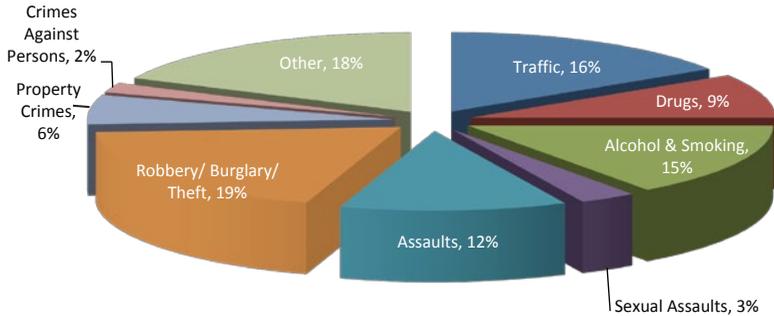


### Adult Referrals By Crime Type 2015

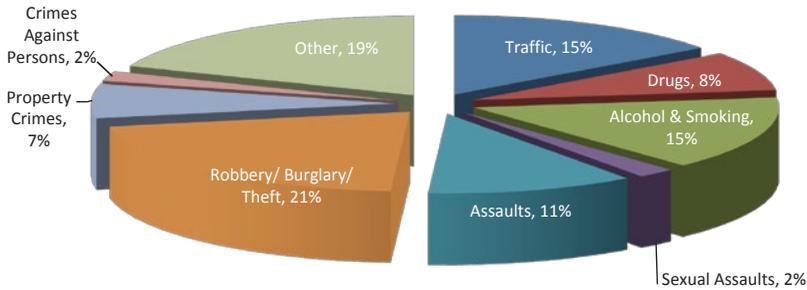


# Percent of Juvenile Referrals by Crime Type

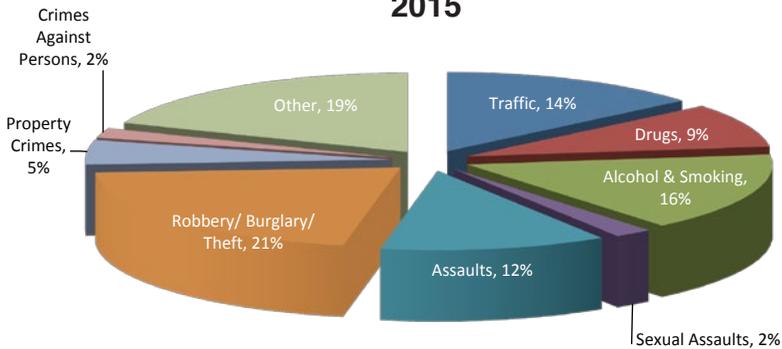
## Juvenile Referrals By Crime Type 2017



## Juvenile Referrals By Crime Type 2016

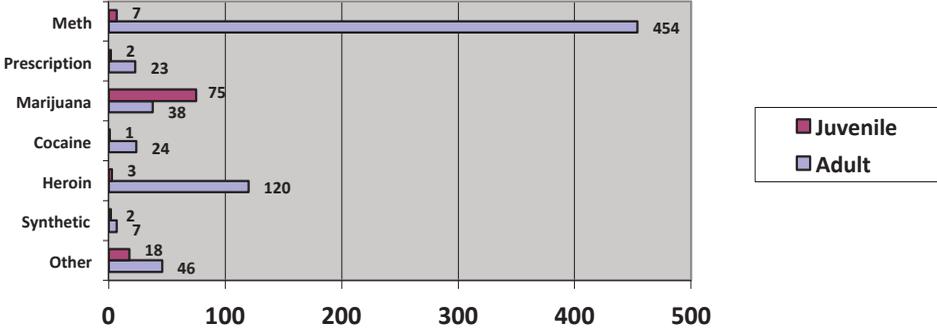


## Juvenile Referrals By Crime Type 2015

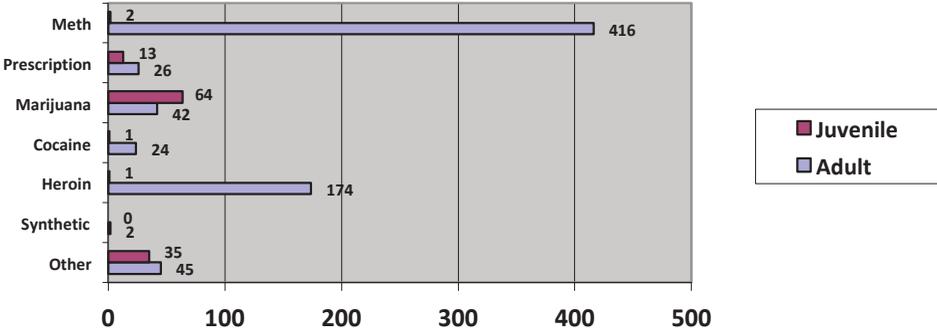


# Drug Referrals By Drug Type

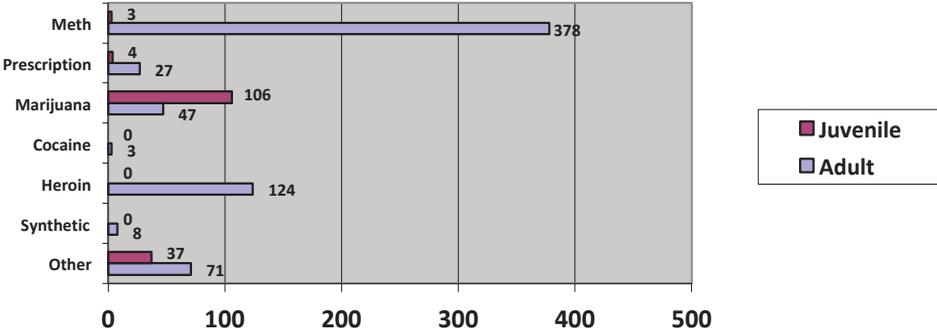
## Drug Referrals by Drug Type 2017



## Drug Referrals by Drug Type 2016



## Drug Referrals by Drug Type 2015



Lately, I have tried to devote a little more time to reading “non-work” material. We all need balance in our lives. In February, I read “Beneath a Scarlet Sky” by William Campbell. I cannot recommend it highly enough. It is a work of historical fiction and an account of courage, patriotism, and passion amid the atrocities of the Nazis in Italy in World War II.

In his speech in Cape Town, South Africa, on June 6, 1966, approximately 25 years before the end of apartheid, then Senator Robert F. Kennedy delivered what has come to be known as his “Ripple of Hope” speech. In his speech, he refers to the courage of the partisan fighters:

*Thousands of unknown men and women in Europe resisted the occupation of the Nazis and many died, but all added to the ultimate strength and freedom of their countries. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve*

*the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.*

*‘If Athens shall appear great to you,’ said Pericles, ‘consider then that her glories were purchased by valiant men, and by men who learned their duty.’ That is the source of all greatness in all societies, and it is the key to progress in our time.*

To me, these are words of inspiration and direction not only for us at the present time, but for generations to come.

Our work of bringing fairness and justice to all is a daily battle. I know I speak for everyone on my staff when I assure you that it is our honor and privilege to be doing this work on behalf of our fellow citizens.



A 12 member group of South Korean women came to visit the St. Louis County Attorney’s Office to learn more about how to combat gender-based violence against women and ways of promoting gender equality. This group included a member of the country’s National Assembly, a police officer, a newspaper reporter, feminist activists and two translators.

St. Louis County Attorney Mark Rubin, along with Assistant St. Louis County Attorneys Rebekka Stumme and Vicky Wanta, Victim Witness Director Patty Wheeler and Arrowhead Regional Corrections Chief Probation Officer Wally Kostich addressed the Korean women.