

## Stetson presents Bob Dillinger with public service award

Stetson University College of Law presented this year's prestigious William Reece Smith Jr. Public Service Award to Bob Dillinger JD '76, who has served for 18 years as Public Defender for the Sixth Judicial Circuit. This year's award was presented at the annual Inns of Court Banquet and William Reece Smith Jr. Distinguished Lecture in St. Petersburg on Jan. 28.

As an assistant public defender for the Sixth Judicial Circuit, Dillinger served on the Capital Crimes Defense team and was instrumental in publishing Florida's first comprehensive death penalty training manual for defense attorneys. He first ran for the Public Defender's Office in 1996 and has been continuously reelected to the position ever since.

Stetson established the William Reece Smith Jr. Award in 1990 to honor outstanding contributions to public service, the justice system and the community. The late legendary Florida lawyer William Reece Smith Jr., past president of the International, American, and Florida Bar Associations, was the award's first recipient and its namesake. Smith served for decades as a distinguished professorial lecturer at Stetson and was a member of the Stetson University College of Law Hall of Fame, Board of Overseers, and Stetson University Board of Trustees.

Jonathan Rapping, founder and president of Gideon's Promise, presented the William Reece Smith Jr. Distinguished Lecture at the event. Gideon's Promise is a nationally recognized organization that works to inspire and train legal professionals to provide high-quality defense representation to those unable to afford an attorney.



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