

Collin County District Attorney

securing justice for all



Volume 1, December 2008

[Visit Our Website](#)

Welcome to the first newsletter from **Collin County District Attorney John R. Roach** and his staff. This newsletter was developed to keep you up-to-date on our efforts to enhance your quality of life in Collin County through conscientious law enforcement and successful prosecution.

We hope you find this information helpful and invite you to visit our website for more information about our office, community and victim services, and answers to frequently asked questions.

This month's articles:

- [DA's Office Saves Taxpayers more than \\$500,000](#)
- [County's New 'No Refusal' Program Cracks Down on DWI](#)
- [District Attorney Leads the Fight against Real Estate Fraud](#)
- [Internships: Hands on Experience in Law](#)
- [Profiles in Prosecution: Debbie Harrison](#)



DA's Office Saves Taxpayers More Than \$500,000 in FY 2008

Successfully prosecuting criminals and making Collin County a safe place to live are among the top priorities of the District Attorney's office. Doing this while saving the taxpayers a lot of money is a real accomplishment.

Since taking office in 2003, District Attorney John Roach has brought the DA's office in under budget every year. The total so far: more than \$2.2 million.



DA, Local Law Enforcement Crack Down on DWI with "No Refusal" Program

Did You Know?

23 investigators support the Collin County District Attorney's office.

Spotlight on Conviction:

On August 25, the District Attorney's office secured a conviction against Samuel Duran for Aggravated Sexual Assault of a Child and Indecency with a Child. Duran was sentenced to life imprisonment.

The case was tried by Assistant District Attorneys Crystal Levonius and Jo'Dee Neil in the 366th District Court.

[Learn more about recent convictions](#)

Drivers who drive while intoxicated are going to have a tough time in Collin County.

Law enforcement officers in Collin County are obtaining blood tests pursuant to search warrants issued by judges in every DWI arrest on selected weekends. The program is expected to be extended next year to all DWI arrests made anywhere in Collin County.

Blood tests showing legal intoxication, whether by alcohol or other substances, are virtually certain to result in a conviction at trial. The “No Refusal” program encourages these defendants to plead guilty rather than take their cases to a Collin County jury.

About 65% of misdemeanor jury trials in Collin County are DWI cases. These jury trials take testifying officers off the street and crowd out other cases that need to be tried.

About 95% of all criminal cases result in convictions pursuant to pleas of guilty, saving valuable resources that can be applied to the 350-plus jury trials each year in all county and district courts.



District Attorney Leads the Fight on Real Estate, Securities Fraud

The Collin County District Attorney’s Office investigated and prosecuted more cases of real estate fraud than any other county in Texas in 2008. The DA’s office also leads the State in the prosecution of securities fraud.

Many people involved in real estate transactions have been victimized by unscrupulous individuals and organizations that have taken unlawful advantage of the shifting housing and lending markets.

Partnering with other State agencies to expand its resources, the DA’s office is investigating and prosecuting these criminals and bringing them to justice. Our top concern is protecting the hardworking, law-abiding citizens of Collin County and obtaining justice for those who have entrusted their money to scam artists.



Internships: Hands on Experience in Law

The District Attorney's office is seeking applicants for two types of internships:

The legal internship is for law students who are eligible for their Temporary Trial Card and will allow them to work under the supervision of an attorney. Interns will work in the courtroom, assist in case preparation, and try cases with an experienced attorney.

The clerical internship is for law students and undergrads who are interested in law. Interns have an opportunity to work with the investigators, prosecutors and secretaries on research projects, organizing cases and evidence, and filing.

Since the beginning of September 2008, the Internships/VIP program has logged a total of 919 hours of volunteer work.

Further information and an internship application are available at <http://collincountyda.com/internships.htm>



Profiles in Prosecution:

Debbie Harrison, Special Crimes Division, Civil Section

Since joining the Collin County District Attorney's Office in 1995, Mrs. Harrison has earned a reputation as a tough prosecutor. She has been assigned to misdemeanor and felony trial courts, and served as a felony court chief. She has tried high-profile criminal cases, including capital murder, and has handled capital murder post-convictions matters.



Mrs. Harrison's current assignment puts her in charge of all civil matters handled by the DA's office, including asset and bond forfeitures. Mrs. Harrison is the DA's delegate to the Collin County Bail Bond Board. She established an effective bond forfeiture program that has led to more than 6,600 civil judgments in the county's favor since October 2003, totaling more than \$4.4 million.

Mrs. Harrison is one of two working moms on a part-time schedule in the DA's office, making her recent achievements all the more remarkable.

Collin County District Attorney's Office

2100 Bloomdale Road, Suite 20004

McKinney, TX 75071

Phone: 972.548.4323

Fax: 214.491.4860