

What is the Southern Public Defender Training Center?

The Southern Public Defender Training Center (SPDTC) is an organization committed to providing training to new public defenders throughout the South. It is the SPDTC philosophy that in order to groom excellent public defenders it is important to recruit talented new lawyers, to give them comprehensive training, and to provide them a supportive community during the early years of their career. The SPDTC offers a three-year training curriculum designed for public defenders with less than three years of experience representing indigent defendants. This curriculum includes roughly 100 hours of instruction during the first year and 16-20 hours of instruction each of the following two years. For interested offices, the SPDTC will also help to recruit new lawyers.



SPDTC Participants in small group session with faculty members Cathy Bennett (*top*), Training Director, Massachusetts Public Defender and Steve Singer (*top right*), Chief of Trials, New Orleans Public Defenders.

“With privilege comes the responsibility not to rescue, but to serve.”

— Ana Ghoreishian, Orleans Public Defenders
SPDTC Inaugural Class of 2007

Our mission is to build a community of zealous, committed public defenders and to raise the standard of representation for indigent defendants in the southeastern United States through training provided to and partnerships with public defender offices across the region.

The Southern Public Defender Training Center
83 Poplar Street, N.W.
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www.southerndefender.org

Jonathan A. Rapping

Executive Director

Training

The Southern Public Defender Training Center (SPDTC) is designed to fill a void in training currently available to new public defenders. It takes into consideration a big-picture view of what public defenders need to better represent their clients. Rather than being limited to trial skills or discrete legal topics, the SPDTC offers a comprehensive curriculum designed specifically for public defenders. Training is designed to be interactive, making use of exercises requiring role play and simulation. With an average student to faculty member ratio of three to one, participants receive an extraordinary amount of individual attention in small group settings.



Introduction Session
The SPDTC Summer 2007
Training at the Cumberland
School of Law at Samford
University in Birmingham, AL.

Recruitment

As part of its commitment to improve indigent defense in the South, the SPDTC will actively recruit third-year law students and match them with public defender offices in the South. Each member of the SPDTC training class will be provided with training over a three year period, assigned a mentor and have access to current and former practicing public defenders throughout their commitment.



Faculty and Participants engage in a small group session.

Faculty

The SPDTC offers a faculty of both current and former public defenders from around the country. These lawyers are all committed to the improvement of indigent defense representation and have been responsible for raising the standard of practice in jurisdictions nationwide. For more information on the SPDTC faculty please see our website at www.southerndefender.org/faculty.



How to Participate

We invite offices to send their new lawyers to the SPDTC. For offices with openings that are looking for committed new lawyers we will assist with recruiting and pairing applicants with interested offices.

Participating offices will be asked to pay a one time fee to cover expenses of the three-year program. SPDTC will help interested offices by seeking scholarship assistance based on need.

The SPDTC is currently looking for Public Defender offices throughout the southeastern region of the United States to participate in this training endeavor. For more information, please contact:

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OR

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Or Call

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