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Russ Oliver - Arson Prosecutor of the Year Award

SEPTEMBER 17TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Stoddard County, Missouri - On September 15 , 2015 the Professional Fire & Fraud Investigator's Association (PFFIA) named Stoddard County Prosecuting Attorney Russ Oliver their Arson Prosecutor of the year.

Oliver was nominated for the award by PFFIA association member and State Fire Marshall Jason Dunn. Over the past 5 years, Dunn has worked with Oliver on numerous arson cases. In introducing Oliver to receive the award, Dunn stated, "Russ has been great to work with on arson cases. He takes them very seriously, devotes the time and resources to insure that the investigation and prosecution of these crimes is complete and thorough. He also obtains very appropriate sentences for Defendants of arson cases. Russ is an all-around great prosecutor of arson cases for Stoddard County."

While accepting the award Oliver addressed the crowd of fire investigators, Oliver stated "any prosecution can only be as effective as the investigation of the crime. Stoddard County is very fortunate to have Tim McCoy as an Investigator in the Prosecutor's Office. Tim is willing to work tirelessly to solve these difficult cases. Tim is the most tenacious investigator I have ever had the pleasure to work with and the Prosecutor's Office is blessed to have his service. This award is as much Tim's award as it is mine." Oliver continued "arson cases are some of the most difficult cases to investigate. Scant evidence at the scene (due to it all burning in the fire) sometimes makes it very difficult to tell the difference between a fire that

involves only a tragedy and one that involves a crime. These cases take an enormous amount of time and manpower to properly investigate. But these cases are worth the effort, because the victims' loss deserves justice."

Oliver continued, stating that "arson is a violent crime. No other crime can change the world view of victims like arson can. Security in our homes and businesses is paramount and essential to Americans' sense of safety and well-being. When a coward is able to reduce the entirety of your life's work to a heap of ashes, it changes that victim. Now that his or her security has been violated, every time they turn the deadbolt on their door and leave their home or workplace unattended, they have to walk away wondering if the entirety of their life's possessions will be safe."

Pictured in the photo (left to right) is Stoddard County Prosecuting Attorney's Office Investigator Tim McCoy, Stoddard County Prosecutor Russ Oliver, and State Fire Marshall Jason Dunn.

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