

# CRESPOGRAM REPORT

BARRED FROM NUMEROUS GOVERNMENTAL COMPUTER NETWORKS FOR TELLING THE TRUTH

## A CRESPOGRAM SERIES



**WHAT STARTED AS A QUESTION REGARDING A POSSIBLE SLUSH FUND MAINTAINED BY THE STATE ATTORNEY HAS NOW EVOLVED INTO A CRESPOGRAM EXPOSE OF HOW TWO COMPANIES UNDER CONTRACT TO THE STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE MANAGED TO GAIN COMPLETE CONTROL OVER THE COUNTY'S COURT DIVERSION**

# PROGRAMS AND HAVE SINCE 2007 FUNNELED CLOSE TO \$5 MILLION DOLLARS IN QUESTIONABLE “DONATIONS” FROM THEIR CLIENTS TO A DONOR ASSISTED FUND CREATED BY KATHERINE FERNANDEZ-RUNDLE AT THE MIAMI FOUNDATION **PART I**

To appreciate how pervasive and accepted political corruption has become during the time that Katherine Fernandez-Rundle has served as the Miami-Dade State Attorney, consider the following email exchange between George Romagosa, one of the founders and Executive Director of the pre-trial court diversion program, Court Options, and Assistant State Attorney David Maer, then the Chief of the State Attorney’s County Court Division.

This email exchange took place days after Fernandez-Rundle started collecting campaign donation for her 2012 reelection campaign.

**Lorna Salomon**

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**From:** gromagosa@courtoptions.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 26, 2011 6:36 PM  
**To:** David Maer  
**Subject:** Re: Jobs Skills Workshop Poster

We are going to place posters with Drive Legal and the Court House. We are also looking at the PD. On a separate note, I have an idea I want to run by you regarding developing a drug and Alcohol awareness workshop program for High Schools. We would partner with MADD and your office. I think it could be great for Kathy and her re-election campaign. Let me know if there is a good time to call you so I can discuss with you in detail.

Sent via BlackBerry by AT&T

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**From:** David Maer <DavidMaer@MiamiSAO.com>  
**Date:** Wed, 26 Oct 2011 17:48:15 -0400  
**To:** George Romagosa <gromagosa@courtoptions.org>  
**Subject:** RE: Jobs Skills Workshop Poster

Maybe a place in the courthouse would be best ?

When this email was written, Court Options was one of the two companies providing pretrial diversion programs for the Miami-Dade State Attorney’s Office (SAO). They had initially acquired the right to provide these services not through any kind of open bidding process, but rather through a series of Memorandum Of Understanding Agreements, which have been described by those with knowledge of these agreements as little more than “handshake” deals, reached behind closed doors at the

State Attorney's Office. The fact that they operated without contracts was an issue that both concerned and perplexed some within the criminal justice community who wondered how they were able to accomplish that feat for so many years.

#### **PROPOSER INFORMATION ITEM NO. 5**

##### *Contracts Performed for Miami-Dade County or the State Attorney's Office (SAO)*

Court Options does not currently have contracts with Miami-Dade County or the State Attorney's Office however we have provided pretrial diversion services since 2004. Please refer to page 5 of this document for a timeline of the services provided since inception. Court Options is proud that we have an unblemished record; to date we have not received any informal or formal complaints regarding the services provided.

The email from Romagosa to Maer was among almost 6000 thousand emails and documents I reviewed during the 4 month investigation leading to this series, and where I found other emails written by Romagosa revealing the degree to which he was willing to commit the resources of his company, including "human resources" in order to ingratiate and align his company fortunes with Fernandez-Rundle's political and campaign needs.

Romagosa periodically sent emails to Maer proposing how Court Option's "clients" could work off their community service hours on projects associated with the State Attorney's Office such as [Project Green Team](#), that was supposedly created to bring together "volunteers to clean, repair, improve and beautify targeted communities," around the county.

When he wasn't committing the company's resources and "clients" to projects directly tied to the SAO, he was [brain storming with both Fernandez-Rundle](#) and Maer on other possible ways to use community service workers.

In one instance, he floated the idea of "adopting a church," and using community service workers to help fix up and beautify the homes of some of the parishioners.

**From:** [gromagosa@courtoptions.org](mailto:gromagosa@courtoptions.org) [<mailto:gromagosa@courtoptions.org>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 05, 2013 01:47 PM Eastern Standard Time

**To:** David Maer

**Subject:** Re:

Thinking about adopting a church. 1)Doing a beautification event. 2) Picking a few families from the church and doing a beautification for their home as well. We would provide donations and community service workers.

Sent via BlackBerry by AT&T

On another occasion, after the State Attorney's Office in 2013 was pressured into putting out an RFP for the misdemeanor pretrial diversion program that Court Options and The Advocate Program - the other diversion program that is part of this series were providing through a Memorandum Of Understanding Agreement. Romagosa sent Katherine

Memorandum Of Understanding Agreement - Romagosa sent Katherine Fernandez-Rundle a proposal entitled, [Community Relations Initiative](#), that included using individuals who were required to work off community service hours to work off some of those hours off on Special Event Projects sponsored by various County Commissioners, the same Commissioners who would be approving whatever contract was reached through the RFP process.

Court Options currently conducts a community service assessment/screening intake as part of the strategy of placing participants in agencies where their skills fit the needs of the agency. Court Options has developed a myriad of professional partnership with local not-for-profit agencies, who accept community service workers on a daily basis. Although the current system is working well, we believe we can optimize community service work by implementing the group or event model described in this proposal. In our outline you will see both new initiatives as well some that are currently under development.

**Green Team Beautification Initiative:** Court Options will partner with your office on the identification and selection of places in the community in need of help. Court Options would be responsible for coordinating and supplying a community service work force. This work force would also include Court Option Staff as well as private citizen's volunteers. As you know, there is a future event currently being coordinated by David Maer and Janeen Jones for January 19<sup>th</sup> at West Perrine Park.

**Blood Donation Initiative:** Court Options proposes to accept 10 community service hours in exchange for a donation to the bloodmobile or any blood bank with your approval.

**County Commissioner Initiative:** Court Options will partner with your office and each county commissioner on the development of special events throughout the year. Again, Court Options will provide community service workers, staff and will attempt to obtain private donations for each event according to the needs of each project.

At times it's hard to determine whether Romagosa is in charge of running a company that is supposed to be providing pretrial diversion programs, or whether he is one the State Attorney's PR representatives.

Here is an email where he pitches the idea to allow some of his "clients" to "donate" Thanksgiving dinners in exchange for having 10 hours of their community service knocked off, and all for the greater glory and benefit of Katherine Fernandez-Rundle.

**From:** George Romagosa <gromagosa@courtoptions.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 11, 2012 5:45 PM  
**To:** Don L. Horn  
**Cc:** David Maer  
**Subject:** Turkey Drive

Don:

I wanted to follow-up with you regarding our last conversation regarding the Turkey Drive. I have included a brief outline of the goal of this project.

Goal: Provide a Turkey Dinner for 50-100 families in need for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

#### Thanksgiving Community Outreach Turkey Drive Proposal

Court Options will coordinate a Turkey Drive in a partnership with your office. The typical diversion client who is assigned community service hours is required to complete anywhere from 50-100 hours. We would ask your approval to allow clients to donate a Turkey Dinner for a family of five in exchange for 10 community hours. Clients will only have the option of exchanging 10 community service hours and would still have to fulfill the rest of the hours as directed by Court Options. This will not be an opportunity for clients to buy their way out of their community service responsibility. Instead, clients will have an opportunity to help needy families during the holidays. Court Options will provide an equal match for the first 50 donations. We would assist your office in identifying specific communities in need of a thanksgiving dinner. Additionally, we will provide staff and additional community service workers for the event. As I stated in the earlier email to Kathy, the event would go under the State Attorneys name.

Please let me know your thoughts. Feel free to call me on my cell# 954.303.0584 if you have any questions or suggestions. Thanks

To appreciate the impact of what community service can mean for those select organizations favored by Court Options, they revealed as part of a 2012 report to the SAO, that during an 18 month period of time, their ***Back On Track, Reckless Driving Diversion Program*** "clients" completed ***over 31,000 hours*** of community service.

Add up the various programs that Court Options operates that require individuals to serve community service hours and the number of those hours could in recent years account for 250,000 to 300,000 hours.

Florida Statute 948.031 sets the conditions for the use of individuals required to perform community service, and using individuals on probation to work on "special events."

## The 2012 Florida Statutes

[Title XLVII](#)  
CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AND  
CORRECTIONS

[Chapter 948](#)  
PROBATION AND COMMUNITY  
CONTROL

[View Entire  
Chapter](#)

### **948.031 Condition of probation or community control; public service.—**

(1) Any person who is convicted of a felony or misdemeanor and who is placed on probation or into community control may be required as a condition of supervision to perform some type of public service for a tax-supported or tax-exempt entity, with the consent of such entity. Such public service shall be performed at a time other than during such person's regular hours of employment.

(2) Upon the request of the chief judge of the circuit, the Department of Corrections shall establish a public service program for a county, which program may include, but shall not be limited to, any of the following types of public service:

(a) Maintenance work on any property or building owned or leased by any state, county, or

(a) Maintenance work on any property or building owned or leased by any state, county, or municipality or any nonprofit organization or agency.

(b) Maintenance work on any state-owned, county-owned, or municipally owned road or highway.

(c) Landscaping or maintenance work in any state, county, or municipal park or recreation area.

(d) Work in any state, county, or municipal hospital or any developmental services institution or other nonprofit organization or agency.

History.—s. 1, ch. 76-70; s. 17, ch. 83-131; s. 77, ch. 87-226; s. 30, ch. 89-308.

The idea that Court Options could assign individuals under their control to work off their community service hours by “volunteering” to work on “Special Projects” sponsored by County Commissioners, is the kind of behavior one associates with politicians in Banana Republic countries and comes with an implied, if not overt understanding that these workers represent a Quid Pro Quo for the trading of favors.

Even worse is the notion that the State Attorney’s Office after prosecuting individuals who, if placed on probation, would then become “clients” of Court Options - whose under contract to the SAO - and then Court Options and the SAO would enter into deals that provided the SAO with some of these same individuals as “volunteer” workers for community service projects that were intended to burnish the State Attorney’s image, like the example below, is at best a conflict of interest, and at worse an outright abuse of power.

### **Lorna Salomon**

**From:** David Maer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 24, 2012 9:05 AM  
**To:** 'gromagosa@courtoptions.org'  
**Subject:** Fw: Jan 16 2013 West Perrine Park renovation

----- Original Message -----

From: David Maer  
Sent: Wednesday, October 24, 2012 08:54 AM  
To: 'gerogeromagosa@courtoptions.org' <gerogeromagosa@courtoptions.org>; Sherria Williams; Janeen Jones; Ed Griffith; Terry Gonzalez-Chavez; Katherine Fernandez Rundle; Leonardo Mendoza; Chet Zerlin; Don L. Horn; Annette Puig-Mena; Steve Machin  
Subject: Jan 16 2013 West Perrine Park renovation

George--after meeting with my colleagues yesterday we are pleased to accept your proposal to partner in the workday renovation project for West Perrine Park.

Wednesday, Jan 16 falls in the week of both Dr Martin Luther King Jr's birthday, the annual parade in Perrine, and 4 days before the federal holiday.

Depending on her schedule, this may present an opportunity for the State Attorney to announce the project and invite residents of the area to join the effort at her appearance at preparade ceremonies

as well as at the parade itself on January 12 (which is why I am including our media reps in this message so they can pencil this in on their calendars and be aware of it as the plan progresses).

Sherria and Janeen are the SAO Green Team coordinators for this project. We need to determine how many diversion clients you will have and make a couple of site visits in advance to plan how we will divide the workers for each facet of the project (painting, planting, cleaning). Also, that all the paperwork, access and plans are approved by the Dept of Parks and Rec.

Your offer to provide the supplies and landscaping materials is much appreciated. Do we need to have Public Works/Parks on board for tools?

Let's take a ride out there soon--we need to take pics for "before and after" photos--I will make sure Janeen gets our camera out there.

Thank you again for this opportunity. I'm sure it will be a nice change in weather conditions from the 99 degree temps during the project we did in Miami Gardens in September!

David

Romagosa's role in all of this was little more than that of a Pimp, exploiting his access to individuals who he could use as "human capital" in an effort to curry favor and political brownie points with politicians who had a direct impact on his company's financial well-being.

While acknowledging the often self-destructive behavior that results in individuals becoming enmeshed in the criminal justice system, the process in Miami-Dade County, starting with the process that allowed two companies to capture the pretrial diversion and probation service business, to the way that judges "encourage" individuals to become "clients" of these programs, and then to the way that these companies then take advantage of them either financially through add-on fees and mandatory "donations," or by a process that results in these individuals being coerced into "volunteering" to work off their community service hours on these politically motivated projects all point to a built-in system of exploitation that could better be described as "shooting fish in a barrel."

For now though, allow me to take a step back and set the stage for why and how this series came into being.

### **ALL OF THIS STARTED WITH A SIMPLE QUESTION**

My discovery of the co-mingled activities of the State Attorney's Office, the 11th Judicial Circuit, The Advocate Program, Court Options and the Miami Foundation that went into the making of this 6 part series was a completely unintended consequence of my efforts get to the bottom of a simple question that prompted me in June of 2014, to write Miami-Dade State Attorney Katherine Fernandez-Rundle, asking her to account for the expenditure of the \$24,892.85 of unused campaign funds that she had

transferred from her campaign account to her “donor assisted” Katherine Fernandez-Rundle Fund, maintained by the Miami Foundation. It’s a story that I’ve previously detailed in my series of 3 stories [that have been prominently featured on site for the last 138 days](#).

It was Fernandez-Rundle’s refusal to provide me with a straight forward answer last October as to why she, the Miami-Dade State Attorney, would transfer money to what I had come to consider and describe as a secret slush fund that led me last December to uncover information on why and how this “donor assisted fund” had been created, and more importantly, whether or not the Katherine Fernandez-Rundle Fund had received donations from individuals and/or law firms who dealt with the State Attorney’s Office in ways that might raise questions of unethical behavior.

It didn’t take long, after I started digging, to discover that in 2007, prior to her creation of the Katherine Fernandez-Rundle Fund, Katherine Fernandez-Rundle [had also created the Denise Moon Memorial Fund, which like her fund, was a “donor assisted fund” maintained by the Miami Foundation](#).

That discovery prompted me to file a series of public records requests for the financial records of the Denise Moon Memorial Fund that revealed that from 2007 thru 2015, The Advocate Program and Court Options had collected and transferred close to \$5 million dollars to this fund, and to discover that these monies came from “donations” collected by these companies from their “clients.”

The discovery of these “donations” to the ***Denise Moon Memorial Fund*** was both a surprise and a realization that what I thought was simply a case of the Miami-Dade State Attorney engaging in some questionable behavior through the maintenance of a Secret Fund was actually a far, far larger story that opened a door into how these two companies had managed for years - in The Advocate Program’s case 37 years, and in Court Options, 12 years - to operate “offender-funded” programs that collected well over \$100 million dollars in “client fees.”

## **CRIME PAYS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**

When it comes to crime and punishment, most people mistakenly refer to the administration of justice in America as the “criminal justice system.”

That’s not really accurate. What more realistically describes what happens when it come to the administration of justice in America is that it is a “criminal justice industry.”

The cost of administering crime in America is **\$212 BILLION** a year



business, with an increasing amount of that administration being turned over to non-profit and for-profit companies, whether it be the operation of private prisons where the country's two largest private prison companies in 2012 [accounted for combined revenues of \\$3.3 BILLION](#), or to private pre-trial and probation companies - like the ones on Miami-Dade County - which have become the subject of increasing concern across the country as their business practices have come under criticism for numerous questionable practices detailed in articles, such as a 2014 New Yorker magazine story labeled as [Get Out Of Jail, Inc.](#)

While there have been positive results associated with increasing the ability to keep people out of jail while at the same time attempting to provide them with program services intended to help them deal with the problems that got them into trouble to begin with, one of the major justifications, and coincidentally a major pitfall that came from the creation and increased reliance on private pre-trial and probation companies was the fact that they are not funded by tax dollars, but rather through the program fees collect from their "clients."

In today's political climate the practice of operating a "offender-funded" criminal justice system resonates favorably with a lot of fiscally and politically conservative folks who unfortunately fail to appreciate that turning over the administration of justice to private companies - and increasingly to for-profit companies - allow these companies to avoid, or evade the kind of scrutiny that comes with the expenditure of taxpayer dollars, and that sometimes lead to unanticipated problems as these companies face a never ending need to generate profits.

## **HOW "OFFENDER-FUND" JUSTICE CAME ABOUT IN MIAMI PART I - THE ADVOCATE PROGRAM**

In [Miami-Dade County](#), the move to create a private pre-trial diversion program for misdemeanor defendants was started in 1978, when a young Assistant State Attorney named Tom Peterson, was tasked with the responsibility to create such a program for the State Attorney's Office. That effort led to the creation of the non-profit Advocate Program.

In 2013, when they submitted their application for an RFP issued by the County's Procurement Department on behalf of the State Attorney's Office for a portion of the misdemeanor diversion services they had been providing for years, The Advocate Program explained how they came into being, and their role in the creation of a state-wide Pretrial Intervention Program this way.

In 1978, the Program was asked by the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office to develop a pretrial diversion program for misdemeanants similar to the Pretrial Intervention program operating under the auspices of that office (which later became the model for the state-wide Department of Corrections Pretrial Intervention Program). In 1990, at the request of the Chief Judge and his Criminal Justice Coordination

Committee, the criteria for misdemeanor pretrial diversion was expanded, through the efforts of the State Attorney's Office and the Miami-Dade Chiefs of Police, to develop more extensive supervision and programming for defendants who were not necessarily true first offenders. Since the expansion of pretrial diversion in November of 1990, these cases have been divided into Class I and Class II types, based on charge and prior record. General requirements include attendance at classes or groups. Class I cases generally remain open three months and Class II cases remain open for six months.

In 1980, the State Attorney's Office asked the Program to develop a diversion program for Carrying Concealed Firearm felony classes. In the mid-1980's, the State Attorney's Office began referring other, less specific types of felony diversion cases to the Advocate Program.

Although Tom Peterson left the State Attorney's Office in 1989 and went on to become the well-known and respected, if at times cantankerous and outspoken Juvenile Court judge, until he retired from the bench in 1998, and was appointed as a Senior Judge, he never quit being a strong supporter of The Advocate Program, even going as far in a 2009 biography as identifying himself as a "Co-Founder" of company.

Peterson's support for The Advocate Program also came with an antipathy for the Court Options program that he reportedly had little hesitation in revealing at public meetings, and which played a significant part in the award of the contract for the misdemeanor pretrial diversion services that is covered in **Part III** of this series as one of two example of how "handshake" deals evolved into "handshake" contracts.

The latest example of an unsolicited proposal being put out for bid was the one made by art dealer Gary Nadar to build a new art museum on property owned by Miami-Dade Community College on Biscayne Boulevard.

The issue of accepting "unsolicited proposals," without competitive bidding is one that bedevils government agencies, because to sell government property or award government contracts without such a process opens the door to questions and speculation of insider dealing and abuse of power that most government agencies would normally consider as an issue worth avoiding.

When it came to her dealings with Romagosa and Valdivia however, Katherine Fernandez-Rundle was willing to forgo those concerns in order to make sure that they got whatever they asked for.

### **PART III - BEHIND THE CURTIN**

Founded in **2004**, Court Options was established in order to fill the need for quality Misdemeanor Diversion Services in Miami-Dade County. The State Attorney's Office awarded Court Options the North Dade Justice Center Division as a pilot project. One year later in **2005**, due to its superior performance, Court Options was awarded with an additional four branch courts which included Hialeah, South Dade, Miami Beach, and

Coral Gables. As Court Options demonstrated its capacity to serve a growing number of individuals while maintaining a high level of quality and integrity, it was granted an additional two (2) divisions in the Richard E. Gerstein Justice Building in October 2006. Misdemeanor Diversion includes an educational component that is attached to each case and charge as well as the free of charge wrap around services (workshops) that Court Options offers every offender. Cases remain open from 3-6 months depending on the charge.

success, The Advocate Program returned to Fernandez-Rundle in an effort to have her approve an expansion the "pilot program" to other courtrooms as a way for them to get part of the action.

It was then I was told, that The Advocate Program put up such a fight that Fernandez-Rundle, in an effort to keep the peace decided to give Court Options the courtrooms in the satellite courthouses at the North and South end of the County, and she gave the Advocate Program the courtrooms in the main courthouse.

This division of courtrooms lasted only until it became evident that The Advocate Program had gotten the better of the deal because the courtrooms in the Main Courthouse were generating more clients and more money than the courtrooms at the North and South end of the county.

As a result, Court Options started complaining, and a decision was made to divvy up the courtrooms in the main courthouse to give them "an additional (2) Divisions in the Richard E. Gerstein Justice Building."

By 2008, Court Options according to their version had done such a good job with their "pilot program" that they were awarded a new felony diversion program, which to this day continues to be operated under a Memorandum Of Understanding Agreement.

In 2008 Court Options was awarded the Felony Diversion Program in Miami-Dade County based on several proposals and discussions with the SAO. Court Options proposed to implement smaller specialized caseloads, innovative curriculum along with a collections unit that would increase *restitution collections* on behalf of victims of crime. Since our inception, Court Options has delivered and surpassed all expectations by *collecting over \$3.8 million in restitution* and providing victim assistance. Court Options also created smaller specialized caseloads and delivered innovative programming with a Job Skills Workshop and a Financial Literacy Workshop. This programming has been an effective tool to help offenders take responsibility for the behaviors and belief system that led to their arrest. Court Options has voluntarily submitted monthly and yearly reports on the success of the program along with a monthly financial summary of fees collected on behalf of the SAO. Recently we conducted a victim satisfaction survey which was sent along with payments to the victims of crimes. The feedback received from these surveys proves once again that the

model developed by Court Options for felony diversion has been effective, efficient and successful.

It just so happened, whether just before, or after the decision by Fernandez-Rundle to award the new felony diversion program to Court Options, George Romagosa, Ruben Valdivia, and their new partner Eddie LaCasa - son of Armando LaCasa who I've written about repeatedly regarding the Bayside Hut/Vero's On The Bay restaurant next to the Miami Marine Stadium - decided to show their appreciation for all the "handshake" deals that Fernandez-Rundle had given them by ponying up \$2,544.46 to cover the costs of an event that she was hosting.

COMMISSION ON ETHICS DATE RECEIVED JUL 0 1 2008				
GIFT DISCLOSURE FORM 9				
DATE	DESCRIPTION OF GIFT	APPROXIMATE VALUE	NAME OF PERSON MAKING THE GIFT	ADDRESS OF PERSON MAKING THE GIFT
5/20/08	2 tickets to the JMH Golden Angel Society Spring Dinner	\$50 and \$150 (approx)	Mr. and Mrs. Milton Wallace	1111 Brickell Avenue Suite 2150 Miami, FL 33131
5/24/08	1 ticket to the Big Brothers/Big Sisters luncheon	\$150.00 (approx)	Judge Bronwyn Miller	10710 SW 211 Street, Miami, FL 33189
5/27/08	Food and Servers	\$2,544.46 (in kind) (approx)	Eddie LaCasa, Ruben Valdivia, George Romagosa	1490 NE 7 Avenue North Miami, FL 33161-5661
5/27/08	Food	\$600.00 (in kind) (approx.)	Versailles Restaurant	3555 SW 8 Street Miami, FL 33135
5/27/08	Food	\$230.00 (in kind) (approx.)	Valentina Printing Corp.	407 SW 12 Avenue Miami, FL 33130

I've written in the past about how the creation of the requirement that elected officials have to report all of the "gifts" they receive on a quarterly basis on what are called FORM 9's, also created a process by which these elected officials could, through the use of these reports legalize the acceptance of payoffs and bribes.

I've been able to document that since 2008, Katherine Fernandez-Rundle has reported \$62,611.75 in "gifts" of various kinds including everything from flowers, to jewelry, to tickets to Heat games and other high-profile sporting events, to Black Tie balls and galas, but only once have I been able to determine that she accepted a direct "gift" from individuals who have benefited from a business relationship with the State Attorney's Office.

Now, that doesn't necessarily mean that this \$2,544.46 represented an out and out bribe or payoff, because I give all of these people more credit than that, but the idea that these guys woke up one morning, and on their own, without prompting from anyone in the State Attorney's Office,

own, without prompting from anyone in the State Attorney's Office, including possibly Katherine Fernandez-Rundle herself, decided that writing a check to cover "food and servers" for an event that their benefactor was hosting was a good idea unencumbered by thoughts that this was a way to show appreciation for all the money they had made from the "handshake" deals they had received from Fernandez-Rundle severely challenges the probability that this "gift" was solely given out of the kindness of their hearts.

To add icing to the cake, when Christmas came around in 2012, and most likely in the years before and after 2012, George Romagosa made sure that all of the key people at the State Attorney's Office received a little token of his appreciation for all that they did for Court Options.

**From:** David Maer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 19, 2012 10:58 AM  
**To:** 'gromagosa@courtoptions.org'  
**Cc:** 'ifalla@courtoptions.org'; 'rvaldivia@courtoptions.org'

George, Ruben and Ileana—

thank you very much for the thoughtful presents of sweets delivered to the SAO this week. The dentists who treat us are also very happy with the gifts. Seriously, we could not ask for a better working partnership and friendship – thank you so much and wish you all and your staff a great holiday and happy and healthy 2013

David

There are seldom coincidences when it comes to politics and Quid Pro Quo's that often serve as the lubricant for facilitating deals, and this partial view of the relationship that's existed between Court Options, Katherine Fernandez-Rundle and her staff is but a peek through the curtain of what is a far larger disturbing mosaic of questionable contracts, examples of gross mismanagement and the illegal collection of "donations" that I will explore in the remaining parts of this series.

**THIS IS THE END OF PART I**

**ARCHIVES**

