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Summit County Prosecutor's Office Receives Grant to Battle Domestic Violence *\$750,000 to be used for special Domestic Violence Unit*

AKRON, Ohio (Thursday, October 1, 2015) – October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh is proud to announce today that the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women has awarded the Summit County Prosecutor's Office a grant totaling nearly \$750,000. The money will be used to fund the office's Domestic Violence Unit, which consists of three prosecutors and one investigator.

"This money is vital in prosecuting felony domestic violence cases," said Prosecutor Walsh. "The funding allows domestic violence cases to be handled by specially trained professionals in a manner that ensures offenders will be held accountable."

"Domestic violence cases are very difficult to prosecute because of the dynamic of the family," Prosecutor Walsh continued. "The victim can be financially dependent on the defendant, or they live together, and may even have children together. Many times this causes the victim to change their mind and not testify. These funds allow the Summit County Prosecutor's Office to maintain the domestic violence unit and hold offenders accountable even without the victim's testimony at trial."

With this grant, the Prosecutor's Office has now obtained a total of over \$4.3 million dollars in grant money since the Domestic Violence Unit began in 2004. Back then, the Summit County Prosecutor's Office was one of the first in the state to establish a domestic violence unit focused on evidence based prosecution.

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In 2011, the Summit County Common Pleas Court, with cooperation of the Summit County Prosecutor's Office, created the state's first Felony Domestic Violence Court. Summit County Common Pleas Court Judge Paul Gallagher oversees felony domestic violence cases.