

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
NOVEMBER 1, 2006**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION  
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SANFORD – For the 24<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the Seminole County Clerk's Office has been honored with the highest national award for excellence in financial reporting, presented by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. The *Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting* was presented to the Clerk's Office for the County's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

The announcement of the award came in the same week that Clerk of the Circuit County Maryanne Morse returned \$3,050,986.68 in excess fees, or profits, to county government for FY 2006; and \$1,126,761.59 to the State of Florida for the same period. This marks the second straight year the Clerk's Office has generated more than \$4 million in excess fees. The return on investment was 24.2 percent. (In 2005, the Seminole County Clerk's Office ranked fifth in raw dollars returned among Florida's 47 fee-based clerk's offices; and eighth in percentage profit.)

In 18 years in office, Mrs. Morse has generated more than \$20.5 million in excess fees.

Finally, Brig. Gen. David C. Godwin, CPA, the clerk's director of county finance, also received top honors from the finance association; earning his first individual achievement award for his work on the county CAFR. Gen. Godwin succeeded longtime county finance director Robert Wilson in July, 2005. Wilson earned GFOA's individual achievement award 25 years in a row.

"Dave has some big shoes to fill – and he's filling them with distinction," Mrs. Morse said Wednesday. "Excellence in county finance starts at the top – with its director – and is expressed every day in the accuracy, clarity and professionalism of the 19 people who work there with him.

"There are some who bristle at the idea of an independently-appointed (and operated) county finance department. They hate the idea of a second set of eyes watching over county expenditures. But I believe our streak of 24 years at the top – and \$20 million in excess fess paid back to the taxpayers of Seminole County – shows the system is working and working well."

Included in the CAFR are statements of revenues and expenditures, balance sheets and an independent audit of all funds managed by county government, including the sheriff, property appraiser, tax collector, supervisor of elections and the clerk. GFOA represents approximately 16,000 government finance officers in the US and Canada.