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**For Immediate Release**

## GSU Professor Tapped to Lead Law Enforcement Project

University Park, IL, June 16, 2010 – Determining what works and what doesn't in law enforcement is frequently supported by limited evidence, which can lead to incorrect conclusions, misspent funds, and ineffective programs. Dr. James "Chip" Coldren, Academic Program Coordinator of Criminal Justice Program at Governors State University, has been tapped to help law enforcement agencies across the nation gather and interpret accurate data on program effectiveness.

Coldren was recently named Project Director for Training and Technical Assistance for the National Smart Policing Initiative sponsored by the U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Assistance. The goal of the Smart Policing Initiative is to build evidence-based, data-driven law enforcement practices that are efficient, effective, and economical. The Bureau of Justice Assistance selected CNA, a non-profit research organization that provides public sector organizations with the tools needed to tackle complex problems, to lead the training and technical assistance associated with the initiative. Coldren is an integral member of CNA's training and technical assistance team.

As director, Coldren will work with the CNA team to assist the 10 currently funded Smart Policing sites in identifying efficient, effective, and economical crime reduction strategies, and in conducting sound evaluations of their efforts.

"Currently there is little rigorous evidence to support the effectiveness of problem-solving policing," explains Coldren. "While we may think it is worthwhile, we need to evaluate the soundness of each program. Documenting the effectiveness of Smart Policing initiatives will encourage other law enforcement agencies to institute similar programs in their communities."

The project, according to Coldren, will also help identify weaknesses in existing programs. "Accurate research is needed to strengthen, improve, and ultimately, expand Smart Policing initiatives."

Coldren recently returned from the Inaugural National Meeting on Smart Policing in Washington, DC, at which several police agencies (including representatives from the Boston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Lansing, Michigan police departments) introduced their plans for Smart Policing innovations.

Coldren was selected for this position because of his history of research partnerships with law enforcement agencies. He has served as the Director of the Center for Research in Law and Justice at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he conducted extensive national evaluations of policing practices.

As program coordinator of the Criminal Justice at GSU, Coldren has expanded the program to include classes and community initiatives in innovative restorative justice practices. The recently established master's program in criminal justice at GSU focuses on applied problem solving in justice agencies and communities.

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