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For Immediate Release

Governors State University launches search for mascot

University Park, Ill., Feb. 25, 2014 – Governors State University today launched “Operation Mascot,” its official search for a school mascot. The university is enlisting the help of students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community for input.

The mascot will be the university’s first. It is another achievement to accompany other recent firsts including the university’s first freshman class, the first student residence, which opens in July, and several intercollegiate and recreational sports teams that will soon begin competition for the first time.

The university began taking suggestions for a mascot today and will continue until March 10. From that point, a campus wide selection committee will choose four finalists and submit them to a designer to sketch.

The four finalists and their designs will be made public so the GSU community can vote for their choice. The mascot will be chosen based on a combination of the community’s votes and university officials’ input.

“Our slogan ‘Big ideas live here’ is not limited to the classroom. It is a pervasive part of our campus culture,” said Aurelio Valente, GSU’s dean of students and associate vice president of academic affairs. “We didn’t want to restrict our ideas and suggestions for a project like this solely to university staff and faculty. We are an integral part of a broader and diverse community, so it is important to have as much input from the community as

possible for something that is going to be a lasting symbol of the university.”

The official announcement of the university mascot is scheduled for May 1. Prizes will go to those who submitted the four finalists. Members of the search committee are (in alphabetical order):

- Alex Bennett, Student Representative
- Rhonda Brown, Assistant Vice President for Marketing & Communications
- Dennis Dent, Coordinator of Campus Programs
- Cheri Garey, Director of Alumni Association
- Dean Jennings, Interim Program Director for Recreation and Fitness
- Dr. Brian McKenna, Associate Professor of Accounting
- Kristie Nieman, Student Representative
- Courtney Sanders, Vice President of Enrollment Management and Marketing
- Sheree Sanderson, Assistant Dean of Students
- Dr. Randi Schneider, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Dr. Aurélio Valente, Dean of Students and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Sarah Wicklin, Student Representative
- Dr. John Yunger, Professor of Biology

To submit a suggestion for the mascot, go to www.govst.edu/operationmascot.