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For Immediate Release

Bankhead of State's Attorney's Office to Speak on Creating Safe Schools

University Park, IL, October 1, 2008 - Learning what is fair and effective in coping with children is not always easy or clear-cut. Kathleen Bankhead, Chief of the Juvenile Justice Bureau for the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, will discuss the need for restorative justice practices and peer mediation in resolving conflicts and related concerns in the courts, schools, homes, and communities at Governors State University, on Wednesday, October 15, at 6 p.m., in Engbretson Hall.

Bankhead will speak to community members, students in education and criminal justice programs, and local law enforcement and government officials as part of the Distinguished Lecture series sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences. Her lecture, entitled "The Good News Is...", is free and open to the public. A discussion will follow and refreshments will be served.

Bankhead has long been dedicated to issues surrounding justice for children and families. In her current position, she is responsible for 85 lawyers, as well as the children, families, and citizens served in the Child Protection and Juvenile Justice (Delinquency) Divisions. She has worked in the State's Attorney's Office since 1990. Her work has included prosecution of both child protection and juvenile justice cases, prosecution of hundreds of felony trials, supervision of courts and staff handling allegations of child abuse, neglect, and delinquency. She is also actively involved in division-wide training.

In her work, Bankhead strongly supports the use of conflict mediation and restorative justice practices in schools and communities. Implementation of these programs by well-trained practitioners has proven very effective in coping with issues concerning children and their families. Children learn responsibility and consequences.

This Distinguished Lecture is part of the Creating Safe School Series, which is co-sponsored by GSU's Metropolitan Institute for Leadership in Education (MILE), the College of Arts and Sciences, and the School of Extended Learning. The series also includes a three-day conflict Mediation Workshop in October and November and a three credit hour course, "Conflict Mediation for Schools," offered in Winter 2009.

Governors State University is located at 1 University Parkway, University Park, Illinois. For more information, call (800)478-8478, extension 6979