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## Governors State University Unveils its New Mascot

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For Immediate Release

### **Governors State University unveils its new mascot**

University Park, Ill., May 6, 2014 – When Governors State University athletics begins intercollegiate play in the fall, its opponents will face off against the GSU Jaguars.

The university unveiled the Jaguar mascot today, after conducting a search that took several months and included input from faculty, staff, student and the surrounding community.

“The university is growing and having a mascot is an important component to a rich experience for our students,” said Courtney Sanders, vice president of enrollment management and marketing. “A mascot is an identifying symbol for a university, an important tool for building a tradition. We are thrilled to start building long-lasting traditions as the GSU Jaguars.”

The university began its search in February by taking suggestions from students, staff, faculty and residents of the surrounding communities. It received over 400, more than half of which were unique. The university’s search committee then voted to narrow the choices down to four finalists: the Jaguars, the Prairie Wolves, the Gladiators and the Bengals. After an artist designed sketches of what the mascot could look like, the university then put the choice to an open vote online.

The university received an overwhelming response, logging over 30,000 online votes.

Sanders said the university wanted to make the process as democratic as possible. With a mascot being an enduring symbol, the university wanted as much outside input as possible when making the choice, she said.

The Jaguar is the university's first mascot. It stands among other firsts for the university coming this fall, including the first freshman class, the opening of its first student residence hall and the beginning of intercollegiate play for its first sports teams.

GSU presented prizes to the people who were the first to submit the four finalists. Joseph Iniguez received \$175 for his submission of the Gladiators. Calvin Rowe received \$100 for submitting the Prairie Wolves and Steven Alvarado received \$50 for submitting the Bengals. Paula Franklin was the grand prize winner and received \$350 for submitting the Jaguars.

Governors State also introduced key members of its sports clubs:

- Reginald Plumber, golf club. GSU's golf club is in its second year of play.
- Dabney Buchanan, men's softball. Men's softball is also in its second year of play.
- Natasha Dillard, bowling club. The bowling club is in its third year of play and has the largest membership of all sports clubs.



- Anita Kunkes and Andrea Johnson, volleyball club. The volleyball club began play in 2010 and just won the Orland Park Park District championship.
- Wenjie Lee, table tennis club. Table tennis began play in 2009 and is currently ranked 14 in the nation.
- Calvin Rowe, basketball club. GSU's basketball club won the Mokena Park District title two weeks ago and upset Judson University last fall.
- The sports program is led by program director Dean Jennings. Jennings has been program director for the last five years.

Governors State University is located at 1 University Parkway in University Park.