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## Criminal Justice Center at USD

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OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

DIRECTOR: SARA FINN

NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS WRITER: BILL RITTER

TELEPHONE: 714-291-6480 / EXT. 4296

ADDRESS: RM. 266 DE SALES HALL, ALCALA PARK, SAN DIEGO, CA 92110

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER AT USD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Like the weather, the continuing increase in crime generates much discussion, but few people ever do anything about it.

But the Center for Criminal Justice Policy and Management, operated through the University of San Diego's School of Law, is attempting to change that. Initiated in November, 1977, the Center seeks to bridge the gap between the legal academic community and those directly involved with the criminal justice system.

"We want to provide a nation-wide resource bank to help improve the criminal justice system's protection of the public," says Ed Meese, the Center's Director and an Adjunct Professor of Law at USD. "At the same time, we want the system to be more fair, just and humane in its handling of the people passing through the criminal justice process."

Supported entirely by private funds, the Center has undertaken a host of timely and unique programs, including an evaluation of California's new determinate sentence law, the role of the law and courts in dealing with domestic terrorism, a study and analysis of the grand jury process, an analysis of the impact of Proposition 13 on the criminal justice system, and the development of a professional journal of criminal justice policy and management.

The Center has the unqualified support of the USD School of Law. "The Center supports our educational mission as well as establishes USD as a law center for the community," notes Donald Weckstein, Dean of the School of Law.

Although the concept of the Center is not new in the United States, there is no facility similar to it in California. Director Meese notes, however, that the Center doesn't want to get mired in the traditional approach to its research.

"We're action-oriented," he asserts. "We want to do more than simply produce research papers which will end up sitting on a shelf someplace."

The give and take between the academic community and the criminal justice professions is the heart of the Center's life system. Says Meese, "We'd like to get all citizens thinking about alternatives so that we can present these new ideas to the people who can act on them."

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