

JOHN JAY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

For Immediate Release

For More Information

**Call: Chris Godek/Doreen Vinas
212-237-8645/8628**

**CENTER ON THE MEDIA, CRIME AND JUSTICE TO OPEN AT JOHN JAY
Three Foundations Support Partnership to Strengthen Criminal Justice Journalism**

NEW YORK CITY (July 31, 2006) – John Jay College of Criminal Justice today announced the establishment of the Center on the Media, Crime and Justice with more than \$300,000 in funding from the Open Society Institute, The Ford Foundation and The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation. The center will provide an array of resources for journalists, bringing them together with scholars and practitioners in support of high-quality journalism to help deepen public understanding of crime and justice issues.

The new Center on the Media, Crime and Justice is a partnership of John Jay College of Criminal Justice, The City University of New York (CUNY), with the Institute for Justice and Journalism (IJJ) at the University of Southern California's (USC) Annenberg School for Communication; Criminal Justice Journalists (CJJ), a national organization of reporters covering crime and justice; and the new CUNY Graduate School of Journalism.

"This center will enable John Jay to play an important role in ensuring the accuracy and integrity of news coverage on criminal justice matters," said Jeremy Travis, President of John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

"The partnership will support in-depth reporting and up-to-date resources that will be widely available to journalists, educators and students, ultimately resulting in a better informed public," said Steve Montiel, Director of USC Annenberg's Institute for Justice and Journalism.

John Jay College received \$200,000 from the Open Society Institute and \$58,000 from The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation. USC Annenberg's Institute for Justice and Journalism received \$75,000 from The Ford Foundation for center activities, including expansion of CJJ's Web-based "Covering Crime and Justice" guide for reporters.

The center's initiatives will include:

- Criminal Justice Fellowships program led by journalist and author Joe Domanick, IJJ Senior Fellow;
- Awards program for excellence in reporting on crime and justice;
- Annual symposium funded by The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation on crime trends, scheduled for late fall 2006 at John Jay College.

As a Senior Fellow of the Center on the Media, Crime and Justice, CJJ President Ted Gest will direct a study of criminal justice journalism. The study will analyze stories and include interviews with reporters and editors about strengths and weaknesses of criminal justice journalism. It is intended to be an annual study that will track, in part, knowledge gaps between the public and the research community, and help identify ways to bridge such gaps through high-quality journalism.

The Center plans to offer symposia on high profile crime and justice issues, Web and other multimedia services, a guide to coverage of crime and justice stories, and curricula and teaching tools for schools of journalism.

Criminal Justice Fellowships will be awarded in early September to six journalists to support in-depth reporting about the impact of incarceration and deportation practices on American communities, the politics of crime-and-punishment policies and the local consequences of prisoner re-entry systems. As part of their fellowship, they will meet with experts and visiting journalists at John Jay College in October, and attend a follow up conference in February 2007 at IJJ in Los Angeles.

More than 100 journalists, academics and practitioners attended the first Harry Frank Guggenheim Symposium in December 2005. The symposium examined the emerging story of the decade-long decline in crime nationally and included special presentations on the relationship between gangs and crime and between immigration and crime. This year's symposium will again examine crime trends, especially variations in crime at the national and sub-national levels, and explore responses to sex offenders and gun-related urban violence.

The John Jay College Awards for Excellence in Criminal Justice Reporting will be presented again at a luncheon during this year's symposium. In 2005, the award for best series went to a team from *The Rocky Mountain News* including Lou Kilzer, Sarah Huntley, and Linda McConnell for a series entitled "Battered Justice," a four-part series that exposed serious flaws and raised questions about the effectiveness of the methods used by the criminal justice system in Colorado and elsewhere to fight domestic violence. The award for best story went to David Bernstein of the *Boston Phoenix* for "The Worst Homicide Squad in the Country," which examined low clearance rates for homicides in Boston.

About John Jay College of Criminal Justice: An international leader in educating for justice, John Jay College of Criminal Justice of The City University of New York offers a rich liberal arts and professional studies curriculum to upwards of 14,000 undergraduate and graduate students from more than 135 nations. In teaching, scholarship and research, the College approaches justice as an applied art and science in service to society and as an ongoing conversation about fundamental human desires for fairness, equality and the rule of law. For more information, visit www.jjay.cuny.edu.

About USC Annenberg's Institute for Justice and Journalism: Established at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication in the year 2000 with Ford Foundation funding, the Institute for Justice and Journalism provides fellowships, conferences and reporting resources to strengthen journalism about justice and injustice. The USC Annenberg School for Communication is among the nation's leading institutions devoted to the study of journalism and communication, and their impact on politics, culture and society. More information is at www.justicejournalism.org or www.annenberg.usc.edu.

#####

For more information about IJJ or USC Annenberg:

Steve Montiel, IJJ
213-437-4404
smontiel@usc.edu

For more information about CJJ, which is affiliated with the
Jerry Lee Center of Criminology, University of Pennsylvania:

Ted Gest, CJJ
202-448-1717
tgest@jjay.cuny.edu
www.reporters.net/cjj
<http://cjj.mn-8.net>

For more information about CUNY Graduate School of Journalism:

Steve Shepard
212-794-5660