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## Law Students Educates Community on Search and Seizure Rights

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# *The University of Dayton*

# *News Release*

Nov. 24, 1993

Contact: Mary Harvan or Teri Rizvi

## **LAW STUDENT EDUCATES COMMUNITY ON SEARCH AND SEIZURE RIGHTS**

DAYTON, Ohio -- What would you do if the police pulled you over and asked you to get out of your car? If they knocked on your door, guns drawn, wanting to search your house for a felon?

Don't know? Maybe you should read Richard Boykin's pamphlet. The third-year student at the University of Dayton School of Law has written a pamphlet to teach people about their rights under the Fourth Amendment, which guarantees freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures.

"I've found that a lot of individuals are not really aware that they have a right not to allow the police to enter their home without a search warrant. They're not aware that they have a right on the street to tell the police, 'I don't want to talk to you, and I can walk away,'" Boykin said.

He got the idea for the pamphlet after taking a course on criminal procedures taught by Susan Brenner, a professor of law at UD -- and from seeing people's rights abused as he was growing up on the south side of Chicago.

Last year's "sweeps" of Chicago public housing, by police searching for guns, illustrate the abuse of authority, said Boykin.

"Individuals did not know that they had the right not to consent to a search, and all the police around made them feel so intimidated that they automatically allowed the police into their homes," he said, noting that his pamphlet "acts, in a sense, as a check on police."

Boykin stressed that he is no rabble-rouser: "I am strictly a law-and-order-type person." He said that as a child he dreamed of becoming a police officer. "But I think that the police ought to have to abide by those rules that ordinary citizens have to abide by."

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Boykin earns no academic credit for the project; he wrote the brochure on his own time. But "public service" is a familiar term for the soon-to-be lawyer, who served this summer as an intern for Congressman Bobby Rush of Illinois. After gaining some experience in the field of law, Boykin hopes to enter the political arena.

Boykin expects the pamphlet to be distributed in the Dayton area in late January or early February.

"I'd like it to coincide either with Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday or with the celebration of Black History Month, because I see this as making a great impact in the [black] community," Boykin said.

He said that people he has consulted, at the offices of Legal Aid, the AFL/CIO, and the public defender, cite his effort's uniqueness. Might the pamphlet have national appeal?

"The jury's still out," Boykin said, smiling.

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For interviews, call **Richard Boykin** at (513) 299-6428. For more information, call **Mary Harvan** or **Teri Rizvi** at (513) 229-3241.