

## **For Immediate Release:**

### **March is National Criminal Justice Month**

In 2009 the United States Congress established March as National Criminal Justice Month in part because the criminal justice system touches the lives of nearly every American in some form another. Most directly impacted by the system are the millions of individuals who have been victimized by crime; the millions who are incarcerated, or on probation or parole; and the nearly three million Americans who are employed in the justice system. The purpose of National Criminal Justice Month is to promote societal awareness regarding the causes and consequences of crime, as well as strategies for preventing and responding to crime.

Consider the following facts:

- An estimated \$215 billion was spent on justice system practices in 2006.
- As of June 30, 2008, state and federal correctional authorities had jurisdiction or legal authority over 1,610,584 prisoners. An additional 785,556 inmates were held in custody in local jails.
- At year end 2007, over 5.1 million adult men and women were supervised in the community, either on probation or parole.
- Crime rates have generally dropped since the early 1990s, yet most Americans continuously believe the crime rate is increasing.
- Roughly half of all Americans (46%) frequently or occasionally worry about their home being burglarized.
- Just under half of all Americans (47%) have avoided certain places or neighborhoods they might otherwise want to visit out of fear of crime.

The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences and its affiliates, along with the United States Government urge policymakers, criminal justice officials, educators, victim service providers, nonprofits, community leaders, and others to help direct public focus toward the need to make our criminal justice system as effective as possible. Awareness is the first step toward improvement. Please do your part to spread recognition and consideration of criminal justice practices by recognizing and promoting March as National Criminal Justice Month.

*The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences is an international association established in 1963 to foster professional and scholarly activities in the field of criminal justice. ACJS promotes criminal justice education, research, and policy analysis within the discipline of criminal justice for both educators and practitioners.*