

PRESS RELEASE

To be released on December 1, 2008:

Boone County State's Attorney Michelle Courier begins her term today. Her first priority will be focusing on an administrative re-organization of the office so that it works to serve all of Boone County.

On top of State's Attorney Courier's list is strengthening the prosecution of the current cases. Courier will be instituting policies to aggressively prosecute the most serious offenders, gang members, drug dealers, and child predators, and to hold drunk drivers accountable. They will include prosecuting drunk driving charges and Class X felonies based on the facts of the case and not on the parties involved. She will emphasize proper preparation for sentencing hearings and seeking tougher sentences to keep the most serious criminal offenders off the street for longer periods of time. Courier will also push to have more cases tried to seek justice in those cases that need to be tried and to heighten the bar for plea negotiations in the remaining cases. Further, over the first few months, Courier's administration will be meeting with the families of child victims to assure them that their cases will be effectively prosecuted. "Being a mother, I recognize the sensitive nature of these cases, Courier commented, "and I want to relieve any concerns that the victim's families may have under a new administration."

After proper transition of current cases, Courier will turn to another priority in need of attention, gangs. She will set out to establish a Gang Task Force to proactively address gang issues throughout the County.

State's Attorney Courier will also have the office more accessible to the public, including changing the office hours to 8:00 a.m. to 5:00p.m. and having the office open over lunch hour. Courier noted, "Sometimes the only time the public has to come to the State's Attorney's Office is over the lunch hour, and therefore, it only makes sense to have the office open over the lunch hour."

Courier in addition wants fiscal responsibility for Boone County and will be doing her share through the collection of unpaid fines and fees.

Finally, Courier wants to ensure that the elected and appointed officials receive well researched, written legal opinions and will be establishing a system that will provide the needs of those officials now and that will provide a database for the future. Courier commented, "The office should be efficiently run. Oftentimes, issues repeat themselves, and the written legal opinions should be organized so that we do not waste time with research that has already been performed."

While recognizing that much work lies ahead, State's Attorney Courier is excited about the challenges these necessary changes will bring and is looking forward to serving all of Boone County.