



NEWS RELEASE

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**USI President H. Ray Hoops and Student Government Association
President Debbie Duren to kickoff Safe Ride Program at USI**

**Kickoff Ceremony for Safe Ride
Thursday, April 25, 1996 11 a.m. University Center**

A kickoff ceremony to initiate the Safe Ride Program at USI will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, April 25 with USI President H. Ray Hoops; Debbie Duren, SGA president; Derek Dillon, Yellow Cab owner; and Gail Riecken, representing the Mayor's Task Force on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, participating.

The Safe Ride program offers students a safe ride as a way to avoid dangerous situations like driving while intoxicated, date rape or other physical abuse, or theft. Students who discover themselves in a dangerous situation can call Yellow Cab for a cab ride home. The cab driver will supply a voucher to be signed by the student and paid by the University.

Duren stresses that this is assistance in an emergency and students should be aware that they ultimately must reimburse the University for the ride.

The Safe Ride Program will be operational seven days a week, 24 hours a day. It is open primarily to service students in Vanderburgh County.

In a U.S. Department of Transportation study it was found that alcohol related highway accidents are the leading cause of death for adolescents and young adults. In another study by Harvard University it listed the greatest public health concern regarding alcohol-related behavior as impaired driving by college students. It is hoped the Safe Ride Program at USI can help reduce drinking and driving and promote community-wide safety according to Duren.

Safe Ride programs are becoming common among college communities, and the USI program is the first such program among Indiana institutions.

