

**For immediate release**

**News from the University of Southern Indiana**

**Davis to discuss Sunshine Laws in Indiana**

Karen Davis, public access counselor for the state of Indiana, will be at the University of Southern Indiana at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 15 to discuss Sunshine Laws in Indiana and the role of the public access counselor. Her lecture will be in Mitchell Auditorium of the Health Professions Center. The program is scheduled during national Sunshine Week, observed March 12 to March 18, in an effort by journalists to help citizens and government record-keepers understand information-access laws. Sunshine Week is designed to help drive public discussion about why open government is important to everyone.

Questions to which Davis will respond are, "What documents and information do you as a U.S. citizen have access to?" and "What are your rights when it comes to gaining access of this information?"

The USI program is sponsored by the USI chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists; *The Shield*, the USI student newspaper; USI College Democrats; and the Scripps Howard Center for Media Studies at USI.

Davis was named public access counselor in July 2004. Prior to her appointment, Davis was in private practice with the law firm of Sommer Barnard. In previous public service, she was general counsel for the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration.

Davis, an Indianapolis native, earned a law degree from Valparaiso University School of Law in 1985 and has written articles on HIPAA privacy requirements and presented at numerous seminars on HIPAA privacy and security, Medicaid and Medicare law, and Indiana's public access laws.

Davis will hold a question-and-answer session after her presentation. The program is free, and the public is invited.

Ronald C. Roat, master of ceremonies for the evening and associate professor and coordinator of the print and online journalism program at USI, will begin the program with a brief presentation, "Freedom Matters."

Roat joined the USI faculty in 1986 after a career as a reporter, columnist, and editor at nine newspapers, including the *Lansing State Journal* and the *Dayton Daily News* and is the author of three mystery novels. A Michigan native, he earned his master's degree at Oregon State University. He writes a weekly Internet column for *The Evansville Courier & Press*.

**Press Briefing before lecture**

Karen Davis will be available at a press conference at 6:15 p.m. on March 15 in Mitchell Auditorium in the Health Professions Center at USI.

Parking for the program will be available in parking lots near the Health Professions Center at USI. For more information, e-mail [jlmurphy84@yahoo.com](mailto:jlmurphy84@yahoo.com) or [pferrier@usi.edu](mailto:pferrier@usi.edu).