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PRESS ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday May 8, 2012

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**INAUGURATION OF THE NEW JUVENILE DIVERSION
E.M.P.O.W.E.R. PROGRAM**

On Wednesday May 9, 2012, the Juvenile Probation Department will be launching its new E.M.P.O.W.E.R. program (Encouraging More Positive Opportunities With Empathy and Respect), which will focus on diverting juvenile cases involving minors with mental illnesses.

Additionally, the E.M.P.O.W.E.R. program seeks to provide engagement to long-term treatment services to youth with serious mental illnesses.

Representatives from many of the participating agencies are expected to attend the inauguration of the program, including El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal, District Attorney Jaime Esparza, El Paso Public Defender Clara Hernandez, UTEP President Diana Natalicio, County Commissioner Anna Perez, 65th District Court Judge Yahara Lisa Gutierrez, NAMI President Sindi Elloreaga, and County Mental Health Services Director Rita Ruelas.

WHO: Representatives from participating agencies.

WHAT: Inauguration of the new E.M.P.O.W.E.R. Program

WHEN: Wednesday May 9, 2012, at 11:30 a.m.

**WHERE: Diversion Community Court
6400 Delta Dr., El Paso, Texas 79905**

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