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Drunk Driving Defense College Formed by Group of DUI Specialists

By Michelle Bates Deakin

A group of specialists in defending drunk driving convictions has formed "The National College for DUI Defense" to educate and recognize lawyers who concentrate on these cases.

The first college, planned for May 1995, will be an intensive, week-long program designed to teach lawyers how to win these cases at trial. At the program's conclusion, each participant will receive a certificate for having completed the college.

William C. Head of Atlanta, education program chairman of the college, which was formed in August, said the group's founders organized the college because they believed too many lawyers were plea bargaining DUI cases rather than taking them to trial and trying to win them.

"In the early '80s when Mothers against Drunk Driving and similar groups pushed all the legislation through, most attorneys just gave up trying to win these cases," said Head. "A few of us found ways to win, while others were pleading cases out."

Head anticipates attracting an aggressive group of defense lawyers to the college. "No wimps or pleaders need apply," he said.

Several prominent defense lawyers known for their work in the DUI field are behind the college's formation.

The officers of the college were appointed last month. In addition to Head, they are: Donald Nichols of Minneapolis, dean; Lawrence Taylor of Long Beach, Calif., assistant dean; Reese I. Joye Jr., of Charleston, S.C., treasurer; Phillip B. Price Sr. of Huntsville, Ala., secretary.

The college also has seven "regents." Like the officers, each of the regents invested at least \$10,000 in the group's formation. The regents are: James F. Campbell of San Francisco; Vic Carmody of Jackson, Miss.; Douglas Cowan of Bellevue, Wash.; Richard Essen of North Miami Beach, Fla.; John Henry Hingson III of Oregon City, Ore.; Gary Trichter of Houston; and Flem Whited of Daytona Beach, Fla.

Head plans to announce the meeting place for next spring's college in October.