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## Media Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Manning Elementary School Holds Graduation for Students in G.R.E.A.T Program

A Department of Juvenile Justice Program in Partnership with School Districts Statewide

**Manning, SC** – On Wednesday, December 18, 2013, Manning Elementary School will hold graduation for 75 fifth-grade students who have completed the Department of Juvenile Justice's (DJJ) Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program. Staff from DJJ's Clarendon County Office were instructors for the program.

**What:** Graduation for the Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T) program participants

**When: Wednesday,** December 18, 2013, 9:00 am

**Where:** Manning Elementary School Cafeteria, 311 West Boyce Street, Manning, SC

**Speaker:** Manning Elementary School Principal Brenda Clark, Manning Elementary School Students Lorena Sanchez, Alexia Gunter, Akira Thomas, and Ja'Quan House, and DJJ Clarendon County Office Director Melissa DeVane.

**Background:** This is the first year that the Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.) curriculum has been taught at Manning Elementary School. Clarendon County DJJ staff member, Angel S. Reed, was the instructor for the program that lasted six-weeks.

G.R.E.A.T. is a national gang, violence and bullying prevention program built around school-based, law enforcement officer-instructed classroom activities. The program is intended to prevent delinquency, youth violence, and gang membership for children in the years immediately before the prime ages for introduction into gangs and delinquent behavior. Program lessons focus on providing life skills to students to help them avoid using delinquent behaviors and violence to solve problems.

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Besides Clarendon, DJJ provides the G.R.E.A.T program in another 19 counties around the state including Allendale, Beaufort, Charleston, Cherokee, Colleton, Darlington, Greenville, Hampton, Lancaster, Lexington, Newberry, Richland, Spartanburg, Sumter, Oconee, Orangeburg, Union, Williamsburg, and York counties. Providing youth with the tools they need to make good choices in life is paramount to their success, and DJJ sees the G.R.E.A.T. program as continuing to be an integral part of its prevention and intervention efforts into the future.

## **About DJJ**

--- As the state agency responsible for providing rehabilitation and custodial care for the state's juveniles who are on probation, incarcerated, or on parole for a criminal or status offense, DJJ actively seeks partnerships that foster its mission. DJJ's mission is to protect the public and reclaim juveniles through prevention, community services, education, and rehabilitative services in the least restrictive environment.

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