

# SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY | LAW SCHOOL

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## SUFFOLK IN THE NEWS

### Juvenile Justice Center Keeps Spirit of "Gault" Alive

#### 40th anniversary of landmark decision

Suffolk University President David J. Sargent hailed Sen. Edward M. Kennedy's decision to recognize the Supreme Court's 1967 decision *In re Gault*, which required that all children charged with criminal offenses have legal representation.

#### Support from Law School

"Suffolk's Juvenile Justice Center works everyday to make sure Gault is a reality," said Sargent. "This decision is the bedrock principle upon which children have a fighting chance of being heard and receiving the services they need in the juvenile justice system. Suffolk Law School students pay homage to the Gault decision in the nearly 3,000 cases we have been assigned from the Boston Juvenile Court and in the public policy work the Center conducts to ensure that the promise of Gault is fulfilled."

#### Turning point for children

Kennedy filed Senate Resolution 194 in the U.S. Congress on May 15, 2007, recognizing the Gault decision as the seminal turning point in American history which "broadened the constitutional protections of due process to safeguarding children..."

The resolution draws special attention to how the decision gave protection to children who were previously denied basic due process rights in juvenile courts. The resolution supports strategies to improve the juvenile justice system that "appreciate the unique nature of childhood and adolescence" and acknowledges the need to "address modern day disparities that remain."

#### Juvenile defenders

The Juvenile Justice Center trains 16 students each academic year in juvenile defense with a holistic approach offering educational advocacy and mental health case management to children charged with criminal offenses. The center also is actively involved in public advocacy to improve the workings of the juvenile justice system.

"We are proud to carry on the Gault legacy," said Sargent.

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