

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SUPREME COURT JUSTICE THOMAS L. KILBRIDE TO SPEAK AT SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Illinois Supreme Court Justice Thomas L. Kilbride will be on the campus of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale on Wednesday to deliver the annual Hiram H. Lesar Lecture.

Justice Kilbride will speak about his observations on justice during an unusual career which stretches from a storefront law office to the Supreme Court bench.

The lecture is scheduled for 5 p.m., April 2, at the Hiram H. Lesar Law Building auditorium. There will be an opportunity for the media to question Justice Kilbride at 3:45 Wednesday, April 2, in the lobby of the Hiram H. Lesar Law Building.

Justice Kilbride, 49, took an uncommon path to reach the top of his profession. Before his election to the Illinois Supreme Court in November 2000, Justice Kilbride didn't sit as a lower court judge, never held elective office and didn't practice in a large law firm.

He grew up in Kankakee, went to Bishop McNamara High School, St Mary's College in Winona, Minn., Antioch School of Law in Washington D.C. and served as a law school intern in the Administrative Office of the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

His real education, however, occurred in the fields of California and Illinois—helping to organize migrant farm workers behind Cesar Chavez; in the Laborers' and Machinists Unions of northern Illinois where he was a member; and in the poverty law offices of Prairie State Legal Services, where he spent his first seven years as a lawyer serving the downtrodden and less fortunate in Illinois.

As the only current member of the seven-person High Court who has not sat as a judge before, Justice Kilbride brings a rare perspective to the position, one of a practitioner for the people in over 20 years of small law office work in the Rock Island area, where he was continuously involved in volunteer service to his community.