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CONTACT:

James Hoyne
Vice President, Corporate Work Study
Verbum Dei High School
Phone: 323.564.6651 ext. 45
Fax: 323.564.9009
jhoyne@verbumdei.us

Dr. Susan Abelein
Principal
Verbum Dei High School
Phone: 323.564.6651 ext. 23
Fax: 323.564.9009
sabelein@verbumdei.us

**FORMER U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE GENERAL COLIN POWELL
ADDRESSES VERBUM DEI HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 18, 2005- General Colin Powell, the first African-American to hold the position of Secretary of State under President Bush, addressed the all-male African-American and Latino student population in a Verbum Dei High School Speaker's Bureau event.

General Powell arrived on the South Los Angeles campus, greeted by Verbum Dei students and selected elementary students from the neighboring 112th Street Elementary School.

He met with Verbum Dei High School President John Weling, S.J., Principal Susan Abelein, Ph.D., Vice President of Corporate Work Study James Hoyne, and selected members of the corporate community, who sponsor Verbum Dei students through its Corporate Work Study Program.

In his 15-minute speech followed by a 30-minute question-and-answer session with the gentlemen of Verbum Dei, General Powell offered students this advice, "You build a reputation everyday at school, in your corporate [work experience], and in your neighborhoods. Be reliable, work hard, and believe in yourself."

Verbum Dei High School offers a college preparatory education to young men in South Los Angeles, including rigorous coursework, corporate work experience in exchange for their tuition, numerous co-curricular activities and highly-competitive athletic programs.

General Powell, chairman of America's Promise, an organization committed to making America's youth a national priority, told students that he always looks for opportunities to speak to young people.

"You have to be successful. We cannot afford for you to fail," General Powell told students. "We are counting on you to succeed."

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