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Teresa Sherman
Illinois Wesleyan University

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Contact: Teresa Sherman, (309) 556-3181

Seniors Awarded Acorn Equality Fund Scholarships

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University seniors Myla Green and Zachary Walz have been selected as 2007 Acorn Equality Fund scholarship recipients. Green is a women's studies major from Ashland, Mass., and Walz is a women's studies, music and business triple major from Matteson, Ill.

The Acorn Equality Fund (AEF), an organization supporting the education of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) students, allies, or the children of LGBT parents, issue up to \$12,500 annually between two types of scholarships. Green will receive an Acorn Award for her volunteerism and advocacy, and Walz will receive the Luke Award, which is based on academic performance and financial need. On Saturday, Dec. 2, both will be recognized at the 2006 AEF Family Breakfast in downtown Peoria.

Respectively, Green and Walz are the president and secretary of the University's Pride Alliance. Active in the organization since their freshman year, both have been instrumental in raising awareness for Pride Alliance. According to Green, Pride Alliance is a "reactive group" who supplement annual events like their recent masquerade ball with activist movements such as inviting speakers to campus and staging letter-writing campaigns. "A strong Pride Alliance was something we felt the campus needed," says Green. "It's been a great way to contribute to the IWU community." The AEF scholarships, \$2,500 each for Green and Walz, will go directly to next semester's tuition.

Since 1999, the AEF, a self-described "grassroots organization," has been dedicated to providing financial support for advancements in education, health, and civil rights of LGBT persons and allies in downstate Illinois. To be eligible for the scholarship, interested students must retain permanent residence in any Illinois county except Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will, and attend any accredited post-secondary educational facility.

For additional information about the AEF, visit their Web site at www.acornequalityfund.com.