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Getting Beyond Race Target of March 24 Program By ISU Political Scientist, Author Richard Payne

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--"Getting Beyond Race" is the subject of a March 24 presentation by Illinois State University political scientist Richard J. Payne at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Payne's presentation--based on his acclaimed new book of the same title--is scheduled for 4 p.m. in the Turfler Room, IWU Memorial Student Center, 104 E. University, Bloomington. The presentation and question-and-answer session is open to the public, free-of-charge.

Copies of Payne's 288-page book--*Getting Beyond Race: The Changing American Culture*--will be on sale at the presentation for \$25. The hard cover book was published last year by Westview Press, a division of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc. (ISBN: 0-8133-6858-8).

Payne takes a practical approach to race relations, pointing out that they are ultimately about ordinary people interacting with each other.

He argues that confrontation, blaming, and dwelling on failure in race relations are not as productive as adopting a positive view and looking at individual success stories.

"Drawing from his own experience of having lived with different racial groups and hundreds of conversations with Americans from all walks of life and racial backgrounds," according to one synopsis of Payne's book, "he writes about those who are helping to reduce the significance of race in society and through their actions are creating models of behavior for America's future."

Among the book's eight chapters are *Strategies for Getting Beyond Race: Reframing the Problem*, *The Changing American Culture: Challenges to Race*, *The Military: A Model of Success in Race Relations*, and *Interracial Relationships and the One-Drop Rule*.

"Although race continues to matter," Payne wrote, "there have been significant improvements in race relations throughout the United States over the past 30 years.

"An obvious example," he points out, "is the wide public support for Colin Powell's hoped-for presidential candidacy (even though he never entered the race) and Powell's standing as a leading contender for the Republican ticket in 2000.

"The central argument of this book," Payne adds, "is that the emergence of a strong and growing black middle class, the dynamic force of generational change, increasing rates of interracial marriage and transracial adoptions, and profound attitudinal and behavioral changes support the view that America is inexorably moving beyond race."

Commenting on Payne's book, former U.S. Sen. Paul Simon (D-Ill.) said: "How to confront the problems of racism in a positive way is the theme of this practical, down-to-earth guide.

Excellent!"

Harvard Professor William Julius Wilson said: "Given the incessant emphasis on racial divisions in America, this book is a breath of fresh air. In *Getting Beyond Race*, Richard J. Payne presents a persuasive set of arguments on how we can reframe the issues of race in the broader context of universal human virtue and, in the process, bridge the racial divide."

Payne, an ISU Distinguished Professor of Political Science, received the Distinguished Ph.D. Alumni Award from Howard University in Washington, D.C., in 1995. He received ISU's

Outstanding University Research Award in 1996 and was the College of Arts and Sciences Lecturer in 1993.

Payne was appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University as visiting scholar in the Center for International Affairs and was a member of the joint Harvard-Massachusetts Institute of Technology Seminar on Political Development in 1988-89.

He has been a Fulbright-Hays fellow and has received three Ford Foundation Fellowships, as well as serving on the Council of the American Political Science Association.

Payne is the author of several books: *The Clash With Distant Cultures: Values, Interests, and Force in American Foreign Policy*; *The Third World and South Africa: Post Apartheid Challenges*; *The West European Allied, The Third World, and U.S. Foreign Policy*; *The Nonsuperpowers and South Africa*; and *Opportunities and Dangers of Soviet-Cuban Expansion*.

His articles have appeared in the *Journal of Politics*, *Howard University Law Review*, *Africa Today*, *The World Today*, and other scholarly journals.

Payne's IWU appearance is sponsored by the Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 2,000 students in a College of Liberal Arts, and individual schools of Music, Theatre Arts, Art, and Nursing. Since 1994, these facilities have been added to the IWU campus: a \$15 million athletics and recreation center, a \$25 million science center, a \$6.8 million residence hall, and a \$5.1 million Center for Liberal Arts.