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## **IWU News Advisory**

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Nov. 30, 1999

Contact: Jessica Munds, 309/556-3181

Event: 4th Annual Kwanzaa Celebration, Illinois Wesleyan University

Date: Wednesday, Dec. 8, 1999

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Memorial Student Center, Main Lounge, 104 E. University Ave.,  
Bloomington

Admission: Free, open to the public

Program: The Kwanzaa celebration at IWU features a lighting of the Kinara and an explanation of the seven principles of Kwanzaa. The program also features singers, dancers, a poetry recitation and a sampling of traditional Kwanzaa foods.

Background: Sponsored by the IWU Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs and the Black Student Union, the Kwanzaa celebration at IWU serves as an opportunity for students and members of the Bloomington-Normal community to learn about a different culture.

Kwanzaa, the Swahili word for "first fruits," was created to introduce and reinforce seven basic values of African culture. Represented in the Kwanzaa celebration by the Mishumaa Saba (The Seven Candles), these values include unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith.

Celebrated from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1., the timing of the Kwanzaa celebration at the end of the year and the beginning of the next allows for a reflection upon the past year and a look towards the improvements to be made in the coming year.

Created in 1966 by Maulana Karenga, professor and chair of the Department of Black Studies at California State University, the Kwanzaa celebration serves as an aid to building community, enriching African-American consciousness and reaffirming the value of central grounding for life and struggle.

Maulana Karenga visited the 3rd Annual Kwanzaa Celebration at IWU in 1998.

Contact: IWU Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs at 309/556-3412