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Linda Chavez to Speak at Illinois Wesleyan

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. -- Linda Chavez, syndicated columnist and National Public Radio commentator, will speak at Illinois Wesleyan University to kick off "Anti-Discrimination Week" on campus.

Chavez will address the topic, "Melting Pot or Boiling Point: America in the 1990s", on Tuesday, Oct. 20, at 7:30 p.m. in the Main Lounge of the Memorial Student Center. The speech, sponsored by IWU Student Senate, is free and open to the public.

Chavez currently heads the Center for the New American Community, which grew out of her work on multiculturalism as a John M. Olin Fellow at the Manhattan Institute. The Center seeks to foster a renewed commitment to a common American civic culture and shared identity among the many diverse people who built this nation and live in it today. The Center sponsors conferences, speakers, and a quarterly newsletter, "The American Experiment."

Many recognize Chavez from her regular appearances on public television's "To The Contrary," a weekly public affairs program; the weekday morning show "CNN & Co."; and her work as election commentator for "The McNeil-Lehrer Newshour." She has been a regular contributor to National Public Radio and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation on national politics, foreign affairs, and domestic policy. She has also appeared on numerous network television news and talk programs and her written work has appeared in a variety of publications, including USA Today, Fortune, and the Wall Street Journal.

Chavez is the author of the 1991 book, "Out of the Barrio: Toward a New Politics of Hispanic Assimilation," which chronicles the largely untold story of Hispanic progress and achievement and addresses the implications of bilingual education, voting rights, immigration policy, and affirmative action. She also authored "A Nation Divided: Multiculturalism and the Politics of Race."

A native of Albuquerque, N.M., Chavez earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Colorado. From 1977 to 1983, Chavez was editor of "American Educator," the prizewinning quarterly journal of the American Federation of Teachers. She was staff director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights from 1983-85 and served as the White House director of public liaison in 1985. Chavez was also the highest-ranking Hispanic in the Ronald Reagan administration as she served as Reagan's deputy assistant.

She won the Republican nomination for U.S. Senator from Maryland in 1986, but lost in the general election. From 1987 to 1988 she was president of U.S. English, a public interest group dealing with language policy.

About Illinois Wesleyan University

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 2,000 students in a College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts, and a four-year professional School of Nursing. A \$15 million athletics and recreation center opened in the fall of 1994 and a \$25 million science center opened in fall 1995. The \$5.1

million Center for Liberal Arts, a facility housing 60 faculty offices, six classrooms, and other facilities for social science, humanities, business and economics, and interdisciplinary studies' faculty, opened in August 1997, as did a new \$6.8 million residence hall. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching promoted Illinois Wesleyan to a "Baccalaureate I" institution in 1994, a classification that places it among 159 highly-selective National Liberal Arts Colleges in the annual U.S. News & World Report rankings. Barron's Profiles of American Colleges, another respected college guide, rated IWU "highly competitive +" in its latest edition.

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