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	NAACP President Kweisi Mfume Slated to Speak at IWU's Soul Food Dinner
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BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--As part of Illinois Wesleyan University's celebration of Black History Month, Kweisi Mfume, president and chief executive officer of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), will be the keynote speaker at IWU's Soul Food Dinner. The dinner will be held on Thursday, Feb. 22, at 5:30 p.m., in the Shirk Center, 302 E. Emerson St., Bloomington. Mfume is scheduled to speak at 7 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased at the Memorial Student Center's Main Desk, 104 E. University St., Bloomington, or by calling (309) 556-2663. The cost for both the dinner and talk is \$5 for students and \$10 for non-students. IWU students, who only want to hear the speech, will be admitted for free and the cost for non-students will be \$5.

The event is sponsored by the Issues and Programming Commission of IWU's Student Senate, along with the President's Office, the Chaplain's Office, the Dean of Students Office, the Mellon Center and the Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs.

Originally from the Baltimore area and named Frizzell Gray, Kweisi Mfume adopted his West African name which means, "conquering son of Kings." It is pronounced "Kwah-EE-see Oom-FOO-may."

Mfume received a Bachelor of Science degree (magna cum laude) from Morgan State University in 1976 and later returned to his alma mater to teach courses in political science and communications. In 1984, he received a Master's degree in liberal arts with a concentration in International Studies from Johns Hopkins University.

Mfume, who became politically active during his freshman year in college as head of the Black Student Union and as editor of the school's newspaper, eventually served for seven years at the local government level and in 1979, won a seat on the Baltimore City Council. As a councilman, according to published reports, Mfume "led the efforts to diversify city government, improve community safety, enhance minority business development and divest city funds from the apartheid government of South Africa."

In 1996, Mfume became president and CEO of the NAACP after relinquishing his seat in the United States Congress. As a representative of Maryland's 7th Congressional District for 10

years, Mfume had served on the Banking and Financial Services Committee and held the ranking Democratic seat on the General Oversight and Investigations subcommittee.

Mfume also was a member of the Committee on Education and a senior member of the Small Business Committee. In his third term, Mfume was appointed by the Speaker of the House to serve on the Ethics Committee and the Joint Economic Committee of the House and Senate, which he later chaired. During his last term in Congress, Mfume was appointed to a leadership position within the House of Democratic Caucus as the Vice Chairman for Communications.

As a Congressman, Mfume was an advocate of minority business and civil rights legislation and successfully co-sponsored and helped to pass the Americans with Disabilities Act. He also was instrumental in authorizing the minority contracting and employment amendments to the financial Institutions Reform and Community Reinvestment Act. Mfume also co-authored and amended the Civil Rights Act of 1991 to benefit United States citizens working for companies abroad. He also sponsored legislation to ban assault weapons and establish stalking as a federal crime.

Mfume has led numerous anti-discrimination platforms on racial issues as well as marches and rallies on affirmative action. He served two years as chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus and later served as Chair of the Caucus' Task Force to Preserve Affirmative Action.

In Mfume's view, the NAACP, founded in 1909, "is uniquely positioned as the effective counterweight to hatred, racial polarization and discrimination of all types." According to Mfume, "Racism, sexism and anti-Semitism cannot and will not be allowed to enjoy a comfortable and quiet acceptance. The damaging divisions brought about by xenophobia cannot be allowed to color our thinking about those who come to our shores in search of a better life...The choice many of us face is whether to stand by and watch in the comfort of our own circumstance, or step forward and dare to get involved."