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Environmental Justice Activist to Address Founders' Day Convocation

January 19, 2010

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Dorceta Taylor, environmental justice activist and program director for the Multicultural Environmental Leadership Development Initiative at the University of Michigan, will be the speaker for the 2010 Founders' Day Convocation at Illinois Wesleyan University on Wednesday, Feb. 17 at 11 a.m. in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall (1210 Park St., Bloomington).

Taylor's talk entitled "Environment, Social Justice and the Challenge of Sustainability," is free and open to the public. The event honors the 30 founders who signed the charter for the University in 1850. In celebration of Founders' Day, an anniversary cake celebrating the University's 160 years will be served from 3-5 p.m. at Joslin Atrium of the Memorial Center. The Ames Library will hold its annual exhibit highlighting the documents from the University's founding, including Illinois Wesleyan's "birth certificate."

Named in 2007 to Who's Who Among American Teachers and Educators, Taylor has spent her career shedding light on the connections between nature, race and gender, making her a pioneer studying environmental justice. An associate professor of environmental sociology and Afroamerican and African studies at the University of Michigan, she helped to develop one of the nation's first environmental justice programs at the university.

The author of several ground-breaking books that explore race and gender within the environmental movement, Taylor's latest work is *The Environment and People in American Cities, 1600s-1900s: Disorder, Inequity, and Social Change* (Duke University Press, 2009). Her works also include *Race, Class, Gender, and American Environmentalism* (Diane Publishing, 2003) and *Ethnic Leisure Pursuits* (Mellen University Press, 1992).

Taylor has written numerous articles, book chapters and essays in the areas of ecofeminism and environmental racism, such as "Women of Color, Environmental Justice and Ecofeminism," in *Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature* (Indiana University Press, 1997).

Professor Taylor received a doctorate in sociology, and forestry and environmental studies from Yale University in 1991. She earned two master's degrees from Yale in sociology, and forestry and environmental studies in 1988; and a master's in forest science in 1985. She graduated in 1983 with a bachelor's degree in environmental studies and biology from Northeastern Illinois University. She returned to Yale as the Edward P. Bass Distinguished Visiting Environmental Scholar in 2005 at The Yale Institute for Biospheric Studies.

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