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Poet Nikki Giovanni to Speak at IWU

April 5, 2006

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan's Student Senate will host poet, essayist and lecturer Nikki Giovanni, one of the most widely read American poets. Giovanni, who has been considered a leader in the Black Poetry Movement will speak at an event titled "An Evening with Nikki Giovanni" on Wednesday, April 12 at 7 p.m. in the Hansen Student Center (300 Beecher St., Bloomington).

A special opportunity for the media to talk to Giovanni will be at 6:30 p.m. Her presentation and a Q & A session will begin at 7 p.m.

The event is free and open to the public, however there is a suggested donation of \$2 or one nonperishable food item, which will be donated to a local food pantry.

Devoted to civil rights and equality in education, Giovanni's writings have extensively influenced the Black American Movement since 1968. Establishing her focus in changing oneself before changing the world, Giovanni once told a Massachusetts Institute of Technology audience, "Do something with your life! You will find that what you have coveted is not worth coveting. There is a limit to what material things can do."

Born in 1943, the Knoxville, Tenn. native earned her bachelor's degree at Fisk University in 1967. She later attended both the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Work and Columbia University's School of Fine Arts. In addition, she has received numerous honorary doctorates from several American universities.

Her critically acclaimed publications, which often boast capturing the militant attitude of the civil rights of that time, include *Black Feeling, Black Talk, Black Judgement, The Sun is So Quiet, The Genie in the Far and Peppermint Dreams* and *Shimmy Shimmy Shimmy Like My Sister Kate: A Look at the Harlem Renaissance*. She is also known for her recordings of conversations with prominent writers such as James Baldwin and Margaret Walker.

Giovanni continues to write, speak and teach about the history and future of civil rights and currently works as a professor in the English department at Virginia Polytechnical Institute.

For additional information, contact Charlene Carruthers, issues and programming commissioner of the IWU Student Senate, at ccarruth@iwu.edu.



Nikki Giovanni

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