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## IWU Eta Chapter of Sigma Kappa Sorority to Celebrate Centennial

January 25, 2006

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – The Illinois Wesleyan Eta chapter of Sigma Kappa, the longest continuously active Sigma Kappa chapter in the nation, will celebrate its 100-year anniversary with a weekend of events Feb. 3-5.

The highlight of the weekend will be the presentation of a check for \$40,000 to create an endowed scholarship that will be awarded annually to an IWU senior. The presentation to IWU President Richard F. Wilson will take place at 3 p.m. on Saturday Feb. 4, during an open house and reception at the chapter house (1011 N. East St., Bloomington). The reception, which is free and open to the public, will be held from 2-4 p.m.



A Sigma Kappa pledge party at Illinois Wesleyan, circa 1951.

Any IWU senior will be eligible to receive The Sigma Kappa Centennial Scholarship, based on criteria that include academic merit and financial need. The scholarship will be rotated each year among the University's academic departments, and faculty from each department will be invited to nominate deserving students. Funding for the endowment was generated by individual gifts from SK alumnae across the U.S.

"We created an endowment fund so that the scholarship will continue for decades, just as Sigma Kappa has, as a way of demonstrating our commitment to Illinois Wesleyan," said Nancy Brown Bicket, IWU '67, of Bloomington and Naples FL, who has headed the centennial planning effort. Her co-chairs were Bloomington resident Ginni Hestrom Pedersen, IWU '72, and Kathleen Larey Lewton, IWU '70, of Stamford, Conn.

The Eta chapter of Sigma Kappa was chartered on Feb. 14, 1906, two years after the Delta Chapter of SK approached a local sorority, Zeta Theta Delta, which had been founded in 1903, about creating an SK chapter. Thirteen women were initiated as charter members on Feb. 21, 1906, and the chapter has been continuously active since that time. Currently, there are 75 active members and more than 800 alumnae living around the world.

Sigma Kappa, which has 235 collegiate and alumnae chapters, was formed as a national organization in 1874 at Colby College in Waterville, Maine, dedicated to the ideals of sisterhood, intellectual and spiritual fulfillment and service and philanthropic activities. The sorority currently supports four national philanthropic efforts, including Inherit the Earth, the Maine Sea Coast Mission, the Alzheimer's Association, and gerontology research and services.

The centennial weekend will include several celebratory events, which are free and open to the public:

### **Feb. 3 (Friday)**

12 p.m. – All-Campus Symposium: "Working Women: Emerging Roles, Evolving Responsibilities and Changing Career Paths," Main Lounge, Memorial Center (104 E. University St., Bloomington); featuring IWU alumnae in career fields including medicine, law, business, public relations, fine arts, education and nursing.

### **Feb. 4 (Saturday)**

2-4 p.m.– Open House and Reception and Sigma Kappa Centennial Scholarship presentation, Eta of Sigma Kappa sorority house, (1011 N. East St., Bloomington);

### **Feb. 5 (Sunday)**

11 p.m. – Centennial Chapel Service, IWU Evelyn Chapel, (1301 N. Park St., Bloomington).

SK members and alumnae will also gather for a celebration evening on Saturday at Bloomington Country Club.

For additional information about the centennial, contact Taylar Kuzniar at (309)556-3181 or Kathy Lewton at (917) 734-5376.

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