



Winter 12-12-2003

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### Recommended Citation

Wallace, Sherry, "Secretary of State Jesse White Guest Speaker at King Fellowship Dinner" (2003). *News and Events*. 4918.

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December 12, 2003

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## **Secretary of State Jesse White Guest Speaker at King Fellowship Dinner**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—Jesse White, Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian, will be the featured speaker for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Fellowship Dinner on Friday, Jan. 23, 2004, at 6 p.m. at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Co-sponsored by Illinois Wesleyan and The United Community Gospel Singers of Bloomington and Normal, the annual dinner will be held in the Main Lounge of Memorial Center, 104 E. University St., Bloomington.

Tickets for the dinner are \$12 for adults and student and \$6 for children under 12. Tickets may be purchased by calling Corine Sims at 309/828-4602 or by calling Illinois Wesleyan's office of Multicultural Affairs at 309/556-3412.

White's visit to Illinois Wesleyan is part of the University's celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day.

Born in 1934 in Alton, Ill., White was elected Secretary of State in 1998, becoming the first African-American man to hold that office in Illinois. As Secretary of State, he has overseen the job of designing new license plates and issuing them for 8.5 million passenger vehicles.

As State Librarian, White dedicates \$6.9 million dollars of his fiscal year budget to support literacy efforts through grant and tutoring programs in Illinois.

From 1992 to 1998, White, a 1957 graduate of Alabama State College (now Alabama State University), served as the Cook County recorder of deeds, and prior to that position, he served in the Illinois General Assembly for 16 years, representing a racially diverse district. As a state lawmaker, White is said to have built a strong track record fighting crime, improving education, and helping senior citizens. He served as chairman of the Illinois House Committee on Human Services and as a member of the education committee and select committees on children and aging.

In 1959, White, who also had a 33-year career as a physical education instructor and administrator for the Chicago Board of Education, founded the Jesse White Tumbling Team for children living in Chicago's Cabrini-Green and Henry Horner public housing communities. Since the team's inception, over 6,700 young men and women have benefited from the program, which showcases the members' talents nationally as well as internationally.