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AIDS Awareness Advocate Beatrice Kerr to Speak at IWU

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AIDS Awareness Advocate Beatrice Kerr to Speak at IWU

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—Beatrice Kerr, a nationally renowned speaker on AIDS, is coming to Illinois Wesleyan University on Thursday, Nov. 18. She will speak in the Hansen Student Center, 300 East Beecher St., Bloomington, at 7:00 p.m., with a meet-and-greet at 8:00 p.m.

Kerr was diagnosed with AIDS in 1987, after contracting it from her high school beau. At the time, she feared coming out into the open about it, not knowing how people would respond. She finally conquered this fear, and two years later she graduated with honors from University of Mary Washington in Virginia, formerly known as Mary Washington College. Kerr next entered the District of Columbia School of Law, where she earned a 3.55 GPA in her first year, but had to discontinue her studies because of her need for health insurance. Kerr then began to educate as many people as she could about AIDS.

Kerr has been featured on CNN, CNBC, MTV, *Donahue*, and *The Jenny Jones Show*, as well as in *Shape* magazine, *Glamour* magazine, *The New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*. She also appeared in *The Heart of the Matter*, a PBS documentary about women living with AIDS. Kerr received an honorary degree from the D.C. School of Law, as well as receiving the WDCA *Women Making a Difference* award for outstanding public service in the Washington metropolitan area.

Carole Corcoran, a psychology professor of Kerr's at Mary Washington, has since invited her back to talk to the students. Corcoran said, "They see themselves in her, and they're shocked. Many of them think that AIDS is something that happens to gay men, or they have intellectualized it and not confronted it. I can lecture until I'm blue in the face and not have the impact she has."

For additional information, contact Alyssa Stone at (309) 556-1370.