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IWU's Guest Speaker to Give American Health Care a 'Check-Up'

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IWU's Guest Speaker to Give American Health Care a 'Check-Up'

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University will welcome to the campus guest speaker John E. Maupin Jr., who will lecture about “Health Care Disparities in America: The New Civil Rights Issue,” on Wednesday, February 1, at 7 p.m. in room E104 of the Center for Natural Sciences (201 Beecher St., Bloomington).

The event is free and open to the public.

Maupin's talk will address the implications of health care disparities among races in the United States. According to Nicole Brown-Davis, director of multicultural student affairs at IWU, the topic is “a very relevant issue in the medical profession,” but is also significant for “political science majors, psychology majors, even education majors” as a matter of civil rights and social justice.

Maupin is the first alumnus and the second dentist to act as president and chief executive officer at Meharry Medical College, a position he has occupied since 1994. As the principal investigator of the Meharry Medical College-Community Health Centers Network project, Maupin has sought to reduce cancer treatment disparities among African Americans in three urban communities in Tennessee. The project is a collaborative effort between Meharry and the National Cancer Institute's Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities.

The National Cancer Institute reports that one out of every four deaths in the United States is attributed to cancer, and one in three Americans will eventually develop cancer.

According to the institute, studies have shown that when patients of different racial and ethnic backgrounds receive the same treatment for cancer, the survival rates are consistently

similar. Significant variation in outcomes among patients of different races, then, suggests that the patients received unequal treatment.

Such disparities are the result of a variety of factors, including financial barriers, systems barriers preventing patients from obtaining sufficient insurance coverage and physical barriers for those have limited access to health care providers as a result of their geographic location.

Additionally, disparities result from a patient's lack of access to information and education about treatment, or inability to communicate effectively with a doctor. Cultural differences and biases, which stem from both patients and health care providers, can also negatively impact the quality of treatment received.

Currently, Maupin is a member of the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education Accreditation of the U.S. Department of Education and the National Advisory Research Resources Council of the National Center for Research Resources, at the National Institutes of Health. He has also served as executive vice president of the Morehouse School of Medicine and as the chief executive officer of Southside Healthcare, Inc., an Atlanta-based, federally-qualified community health center.

For additional information, contact Nicole Brown-Davis, director of multicultural student affairs, at (309) 556-3412.