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For Immediate Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. -- The daughter of slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., will assess the state of civil rights in America in a speech at Illinois Wesleyan University as part of festivities marking the national holiday honoring her father.

Bernice King of Atlanta, Ga., will speak at 4 p.m. on Sun., Jan. 19, in the Main Lounge of the IWU Memorial Center, kicking off a series of events on campus celebrating her father's memory and African-American culture.

The theme of Ms. King's speech, "the dream is still a dream; the dream deferred", rekindles memories of her father's famous "I Have a Dream" speech, delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., during the 1963 march for jobs and freedom.

Other activities include the second annual soul food dinner, which will be at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 19, also in the Main Lounge, and the second annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Gospel Festival, which is from 2 to 8 p.m. on Mon., Jan. 20 in Presser Hall.

The gospel festival, organized by Corine Sims of Bloomington, will be presented by the United Community Gospel Singers of Bloomington-Normal and will attract about 30 churches and choirs from the Twin Cities, Aurora, Chicago, and elsewhere.

The featured speaker at the gospel festival will be 1964 IWU graduate J. William Roberts of Springfield, the U.S. Attorney for central Illinois, whose topic will be "Martin Luther King, Jr.: The Times, The Man - Their Impact on Justice."

In addition to Roberts's speech, there will be a slide and audio presentation of Dr. King's 1966 speech at Wesleyan, and area elementary and junior high school students will receive awards for outstanding work in art, speech, and essay writing on themes associated with Dr. King.

There is no admission charge for King's speech or for the gospel festival. Tickets for the soul food dinner are \$5 for general admission and \$3 for students and senior citizens and are available at the Main Desk of the Memorial Student Center.

"Martin Luther King's programs for social change are as relevant today, almost 30 years after his death, as they were in his time," said IWU Director of Minority Services Joy Carew. "Listening to his speeches and reading his books, one would think he is describing the United States of the 1990s rather than that of the 1960s. As he said many times, 'We have come a long way, but we have a long, long way to go.' Dr. King provided us with a model, but it is up to us, young and old alike, to carry on."

About Bernice King

Bernice is the third member of the King family to speak at Wesleyan. Her father spoke on campus in 1961 and 1966, while her brother, Martin III, spoke at ceremonies last year.

Ms. King, 28, is a law clerk for a judge of the Fulton County (Ga.) Juvenile Court. A 1985 graduate of Spelman College, Ms. King received doctor of law and master of divinity degrees from Emory University in 1990. She was also ordained into the Christian ministry in 1990.

She has served as an intern in the U.S. House of Representatives and as a counselor/intern at the Fulton County Juvenile Detention Center. She is chairperson of the National Advisory Committee for National King Week College and University Student Conference on Kingian Nonviolence, sponsored by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Commission.

About J. William Roberts

Roberts, who received a law degree from Washington University in 1967, has served as the chief federal prosecutor for a 46-county area in central Illinois since 1986. He chairs the U.S.

Attorney General's Advisory Committee of United States Attorneys, a group that helps shape federal Justice Department programs.

Roberts served for seven years as state's attorney of Sangamon County, was first assistant state's attorney for Sangamon County for seven years, and an assistant U.S. Attorney for four years. He has been president of the Illinois State's Attorney's Association, president of the Sangamon County Bar Association, and was chairman of the Criminal Justice Council of the Illinois State Bar Association.

The Gospel Festival

Sims launched the gospel festival last year as a way to perpetuate Dr. King's legacy. "Martin Luther King spoke with a voice everybody listened to," Sims explained. "He spoke of non-violence. I love him because he took God first. Without God, Martin Luther King couldn't have done his work."

"Illinois Wesleyan is proud to host the gospel festival for the second successive year and we look forward to hosting it in the future," said IWU President Minor Myers, jr. "Bloomington-Normal is indebted to Mrs. Sims for her vision and strength in conceiving the festival and organizing it each year."