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For Immediate Release

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Illinois Wesleyan University

NEWS RELEASE

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November 29, 1994

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--The Illinois Wesleyan University chapter of Habitat for Humanity is launching its annual *Hire-a-Habitater* program to raise money for the McLean County chapter of Habitat. The program also will help fund a March, 1995, trip to South Carolina, where IWU Habitaters will build homes for disadvantaged families.

This is the sixth consecutive year that IWU Habitat for Humanity members are foregoing a spring vacation to help eliminate substandard housing in disadvantaged areas of the United States.

The IWU *Hire-a-Habitater* program allows people in the McLean County community to call for assistance with projects around their home. "We are willing to rake leaves, shovel snow, pull up old carpet or do any other odd jobs people need done," said Jennifer Dean, president of the IWU chapter of Habitat. "All we ask for in return is a minimum donation of \$10-\$15, to help cover expenses for our spring break trip to Horry County, S.C., where we are going to help build houses for impoverished families."

The IWU students are paying for their transportation and food and in addition to their gift of time--each student will donate part of the trip's \$75 cost to Habitat for Humanity.

"We sent a memo to every faculty and staff member, asking them to give us work for a weekend. But we would also like to help other people in the community who might be in need of assistance," said Dean.

The cost of most Habitat houses--such as those being constructed in South

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Locals
McLean

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Carolina--is \$35,000. There is a downpayment of \$500, plus 500 hours of "sweat equity" which the family must provide toward their home. The length of mortgage is 20 years and no interest is charged. Habitat for Humanity has the first option to buy a Habitat home, if a family wants to sell.

Every new home purchased by a family has been paid for by previous donations to Habitat. The new family's mortgage payments pay for the construction of future Habitat homes. Mortgage payments from 20 families add up to pay for one house per year. In this way donations to Habitat are continuously recycled to build more homes.

Habitat was organized in McLean County in April 1985. As of September 1994, 26 low-income families in McLean County have purchased Habitat homes. There are three Habitat houses under construction in Bloomington.

Founded in 1976, Habitat for Humanity is an ecumenical, Christian housing ministry that seeks to eliminate substandard housing worldwide. Habitat has nearly 900 affiliated chapters in the U.S. and sponsors about 100 projects in developing countries. By having needy and affluent people work together in equal partnership, Habitat builds new relationships and a sense of community as well as new housing.

For information about *Hire-a-Habitater* contact:

Kirsten Keely 556-2360 or
Brian Rempe 556-2473

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**For information about volunteering or contributions
to Habitat for Humanity contact:**

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