



Winter 2-21-1996

## For Immediate Release

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### Recommended Citation

Aaron, Bob, "For Immediate Release" (1996). *News and Events*. 6575.  
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February 21, 1996

**Contact:** Bob Aaron, 309/556-3181**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--The Third Annual African Celebration of Culture will take place at Illinois Wesleyan University, Sunday, Feb. 25, at 6 p.m. in the Main Lounge of Memorial Student Center, 104 E. University, Bloomington.

Tickets for the dance, music, storytelling, and food event are \$3 for students and \$5 for non-students.

Highlighting the program will be seven members of the Najwa Dance Corps, who interpret African fables and short stories through dance, and In the Spirit, a two-member group, who celebrate the human spirit through Afrocentric tales and rhythms. Both groups are based in Chicago.

Authentic African food will be catered by Vee Vee's of Chicago. Among items on the menu will be jerk chicken; chin chin, an African cookie; spicy jolaf rice; fish stew, and banana-like plantains.

Antwane Cowen, president of IWU's Black Student Union, said the celebration of African culture will help raise awareness about cultural diversity.

The Najwa Dance Corps will perform for about 45 minutes. According to Cowen, the group typically stages an elaborate show, dressed in brightly colored costumes.

In the Spirit will feature storyteller and actress Emily Hooper, a Yale University graduate who has performed in Chicago stage productions, commercials, and films, and vocalist and music instructor Glenda Baker, who sees music "as a healing force and works to help others liberate their own voices." In the Spirit--known for its children's programs, historic dramatizations, and Afrocentric folk tales--has performed at the Chicago Historical Society, Chicago's Field Museum, in the Chicago Public Schools, and elsewhere.

The celebration of African culture is among several IWU-sponsored events in February marking Black History Month, including a Feb. 1 lecture by filmmaker Spike Lee, the annual Soul Food Dinner on Feb. 11, and a showing of the film, Lean on Me, Feb. 26 at 8 p.m. in the Main Lounge, Memorial Student Center. All Black History Month events are sponsored by IWU's Black Student Union and the Office of Multicultural Affairs.