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Bob Aaron  
*Illinois Wesleyan University*

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December 18, 1997

**Contact:** Bob Aaron, 309/556-3181**U.S. Marshal to Address Martin Luther King Gospel Festival, Jan. 19**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--A U.S. marshal, known for his work in equal employment opportunity, will keynote the 8th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Holiday Gospel Festival at Illinois Wesleyan University on Jan. 19.

Robert Moore, U.S. Marshal for the Central Judicial District of Illinois and chairman of the U.S. Marshals Service's Equal Employment Committee, will speak at about 3 p.m. in Westbrook Auditorium, Presser Hall, 303 E. University Ave., Bloomington. The Gospel Festival, marking the 30th anniversary of King's assassination, will run from 2-9 p.m. and admission is free.

The Gospel Festival is co-sponsored by the United Community Gospel Singers of Bloomington-Normal, a non-profit organization, and Illinois Wesleyan. Corine Sims is executive director of the gospel group.

After U.S. Senate confirmation, Moore was appointed to his post by President Bill Clinton on Nov. 11, 1994. He is the second African-American male from Illinois to receive a presidential appointment to the position of U.S. Marshal.

**U.S. Marshals Service**

The U.S. Marshals Service is a unit of the Justice Department. It provides support and protection for the federal courts, including judges and magistrates, officers of the courts, witnesses, jurors, attorneys, and other trial participants. U.S. Marshals apprehend most federal fugitives and operate the Witness Protection Program. U.S. Marshals maintain custody and transport federal prisoners, execute court orders, and manage and sell property forfeited to the government by drug traffickers and other criminals.

**Moore Background**

Previously, Moore served as a deputy director of the Illinois State Police, a post he retired from in January, 1993. Among other law enforcement posts he has held are deputy sheriff with the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department (Rockford) and deputy chief of police for the city of Savannah, Ga.

As a businessman, Moore founded and operated Robert Moore & Associates, a Springfield, Ill.-based employment agency. In 1994, he formed the

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Greater Springfield Minority Business Council and was instrumental in the formation of the largest minority delegation to attend a White House conference on small business.

As vice president of the Springfield chapter of Frontiers International, Moore initiated in 1992 the Positive Youth Development Leadership Program for Black Youth and the Junior Frontier Program.

As president of Frontiers International in 1993, Moore led the effort to relocate the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., statue to its present location on the lawn of the Illinois State Library in Springfield.

Moore, a native of Pontotoc, Miss., earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Illinois, Springfield (formerly Sangamon State University). He also is a graduate of the Southern Police Institute and the University of Louisville. While at the University of Louisville, Moore authored an article, "Strategies for Increasing Black Police Executives," which was published in a two-part series by the U.S. Justice Department in the May and June, 1983, editions of the *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*. The strategies outlined in Moore's articles are a nationwide model for recruiting and promoting minorities and women.

Among other pieces written by Moore is a 1995 article, "United States Marshals Service Gets Record Number of African American Marshals."

Moore has received numerous honors and awards, including the 1984 NAACP Springfield (Ill.) Chapter Webster Award in recognition of his contributions to affirmative action and community involvement and a 1995 humanitarian award from the Illinois Municipal Human Relations Association, Inc.

Moore has been active in several civic, community, and professional organizations, including the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, Illinois Association of Black Police Officers, Springfield Civil Service Commission, Springfield Housing Board, United way of Central Illinois, and the Illinois Affirmative Action Officer Association.

### **The Gospel Festival**

Corine Sims launched the Gospel Festival in 1991 as a way to perpetuate Martin Luther King, Jr. 's legacy. This is the eighth time Illinois Wesleyan has co-

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sponsored the event.

The Gospel Festival is expected to attract numerous churches and choirs from Chicago, Bloomington-Normal, and elsewhere, as well as soloists, singers and dancers. Area elementary and junior high school students will receive awards for outstanding work in art, speech, and essay writing on themes associated with Martin Luther King, Jr.

### **Martin Luther King, Jr. and IWU**

When Martin Luther King, Jr., visited Illinois Wesleyan in 1961, he addressed an audience of more than 500 at the annual Religious Emphasis Banquet. He also met with students in their classes and more informally as part of meal functions.

King returned to IWU four and one-half years later as a national leader of the civil-rights movement and the recipient of the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize; he donated the honor, valued at \$54,600, to the civil-rights movement.

In 1966, he addressed an audience of more than 3,000 at the Fred Young Fieldhouse, declaring: "We must build a greater America. It cannot be built on bombs. It cannot be built on riots. We must work to change the climate that makes for bitterness that causes individuals to turn to these types of self-destruction."

Three of King's children--Yolanda, Martin III, and Bernice--have brought their father's message of non-violent social change, social justice, and brotherhood to IWU. Vernon King, the slain civil-rights leader's nephew, twice addressed the Gospel Festival.

### **King and the Civil-Rights Movement**

King first caught the nation's attention in 1956, when at the age of 27 he organized a boycott of the public transportation system in Montgomery, Ala., as a protest against racial discrimination.

King--the longtime champion of civil rights, school desegregation, and non-violent social change--is perhaps best remembered for the Aug. 28, 1963, Freedom March on Washington, D.C., which brought about 250,000 participants and much of the civil-rights movement's leadership to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. King in his now-famous "I have a dream" speech, said, "I

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have a dream that one day, on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood . . .

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character . . . "

King was assassinated at age 39 by a sniper in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4, 1968, sparking civil unrest in many cities. He was in Memphis to support a sanitation workers' strike. His April 9 funeral in Atlanta was attended by an estimated 75,000 people. One week after he was gunned down, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the 1968 Civil Rights Act into federal law. On March 10, 1969, James Earl Ray was convicted of assassinating King and sentenced to 99 years in prison.

President Ronald Reagan signed legislation Nov. 2, 1983, establishing a federal holiday on the third Monday of January to honor the assassinated civil-rights leader. King was the first person honored with a federal holiday since George Washington's birthday was so designated.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 2,000 students in a College of Liberal Arts, and its Schools of Music, Theatre Arts, Art, and Nursing. Since 1994, these facilities have been added to the IWU campus: a \$15 million athletic center, a \$25 million science building, a \$6.8 million residence hall, and a \$5.1 million liberal arts center. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching ranks Illinois Wesleyan a "Baccalaureate I" institution, a classification that places it among the 159 highly selective National Liberal Arts Colleges. IWU won the 1997 NCAA Division III men's basketball championship.