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## 01/13/1999 - Conference To Focus On Disability Issues Conflict Resolution Diversity.pdf

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99-6

January 13, 1999

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONFERENCE TO FOCUS ON DISABILITY ISSUES, CONFLICT RESOLUTION, DIVERSITY

CHARLESTON -- Was Franklin Roosevelt elected president of the United States because of his disability rather than in spite of it? And could a person with a severe disability be elected today?

These are just two of the questions to be discussed during Eastern Illinois University's fourth annual "Opening Doors: Diversity at Eastern" conference, scheduled to take place Thursday, Jan. 21, in the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union.

Students, faculty, staff and area residents are invited to participate in the event which is again being sponsored by the university's Office of Civil Rights and Diversity.

Free workshops will address a wide variety of diversity issues, including race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation and disability. These interactive workshops have been spread throughout the day to allow participants to attend as their schedules permit.

Three of the workshops -- "Faculty and the Student with Disabilities: A Partnership," "Disability Humor: An Important Bridge" and "Polio and FDR: Effects of Disability on the Man,

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Eleanor and the Nation" -- will be presented by Richard Harris, director of Disabled Student Development at Ball State University. Harris also is a founding member of the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD).

Robert Flot, assistant director of Development Programs at Illinois State University, will conduct "Cultural Tension: Conflict Resolution -- Train the Mediator."

Other workshops and their presenters (all EIU faculty, staff and/or students) include "Faculty Practitioner Exchange: Diversity in Curriculum," Katherine Bartel; "Opening the Closet Door," Allison Toth; "Culture Shock: Experiences of International Students," Carolyn Cooper; "Balancing Work, School and the Family," Jayne Ozier; "Cultural Tension: Conflict Resolution Skill Development," David Onestak, Tina Leonard and Sandy Cox; "Update on Title IX," Deb Polca and Cynthia Nichols; and "Sexual Harassment," Rob Miller.

The conference also will feature a luncheon and keynote address by Teshome Abebe, the university's provost and vice president for academic affairs. In his address, "Opening Doors, Opening Minds," Abebe will consider why diversity is important to Eastern.

There is no charge to attend the workshops or Abebe's speech. However, the cost of the luncheon is \$6.95, and reservations are required by noon, Tuesday, Jan. 19. Those may be made by contacting Eastern's Office of Civil Rights and Diversity, 108 Old Main, (217) 581-5020.