

2-9-1999

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University Marketing and Communications, "02/09/1999 - EIU Examines African-American Heritage.pdf" (1999). 1999. 37.  
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99-37

February 9, 1999

For Immediate Release:

EIU EXAMINES AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE THROUGH POETRY/MUSIC

CHARLESTON -- Eastern Illinois University plans to continue its month-long celebration of African-American tradition and heritage with both poetry and music.

**The annual Kuumba Poetry Reading Contest**, co-sponsored by the university's Black Student Union and the Housing and Dining Multicultural Committee, begins at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, in the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union Rathskeller. Kuumba, which means "creativity," is one of the seven principles of Kwanzaa, one of the fastest growing holidays in the U.S. among African-Americans.

Featured participants will include EIU students, faculty and staff who, during this evening of self-expression, will read original works of poetry and prose. Awards and cash prizes will be given to the top three participants. Admission to the reading is free and open to the public.

Also in the Rathskeller -- at 8 p.m Monday, Feb. 15 -- the "**Historic Soul**" **Musical Revue** will celebrate African-American contributions to American music culture by featuring the soulful sounds of such artists as Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Ray Charles, James Brown and more.

Admission is \$1 for Eastern students with ID and \$3 for the general public.

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