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February 17, 2000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FOUR WOMEN TO COMPETE IN ANNUAL MISS BLACK EIU PAGEANT

CHARLESTON – Eastern Illinois University's Miss Black EIU Pageant will take place at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 26, in the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union's Grand Ballroom.

This year's pageant, with its theme, "Independence 2000: Free Your Mind," will feature Agapé, a male vocal group, as well as the EIU Illusion Dance Company.

Tickets are available from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, Feb. 21 through 25, at the University Union box office. Tickets are \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door, or \$5 in advance for groups of 10 or more. For group tickets and/or information, go to Eastern's Student Life Office, University Union Room 316, (217) 581-3829.

Contestants for the title of Miss Black EIU 2000 are as follows:

- **Sandretta Barber**, a junior business major from Bellwood and daughter of

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Minnie Knox of Bellwood. She is a 1996 graduate of Immaculate Heart of Mary High School, Westchester.

- **Sabrina Bowens**, a sophomore computer management major from Chicago and daughter of Fredreka Bowens of Chicago. She is a 1998 graduate of Kenwood Academy, Chicago.
- **Rashida Garrett**, a junior elementary education major from Bellwood and daughter of Levern M. Garrett of Bellwood. She is a 1997 graduate of Walther Lutheran High School, Melrose Park.
- **LaTasha Harris**, a sophomore accounting major from Chicago, daughter of Leo Harris of Chicago and wife of Al Higginbotham of Calumet City. She is a 1998 graduate of Hyde Park Academy, Chicago.

All four contestants will be judged on creative expression, talent, African garment and evening gown competitions, and their response to an impromptu question.

Since its inception in 1971, the Miss Black EIU Pageant has become one of Eastern's largest cultural events, paying tribute to African-American women at EIU while instilling a sense of pride, appreciation and cultural awareness in their heritage.

Contestants compete for scholarships, prizes and special awards, in addition to special recognition awards for Miss Congeniality, Miss Together, Miss Enterprise and Miss Ebony.

The public also is invited to attend the Miss Black EIU Coronation Dance, to be held in the University Ballroom immediately following the pageant. Admission is free with the purchase of a pageant ticket or \$5 at the door.