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February 22, 1999

For Immediate Release:

EIU GEARING UP FOR 25TH ANNUAL MISS BLACK EIU PAGEANT

CHARLESTON -- Area residents are invited to join the Eastern Illinois University community at one of its most celebrated annual events -- the Miss Black EIU Pageant, now in its 25th year.

Eastern's Black Student Union will sponsor the pageant -- "From Evolution to Revolution: The Rise of the Black Woman" -- at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27, in the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union's Grand Ballroom. Tickets are \$6 in advance (\$8 at the door) and are available through the Union Ticket Office from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays.

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

Through the years, more than 100 young women have competed for the coveted

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crown of Miss Black EIU. This year, four distinguished and talented young women will compete -- Meghann Crowder, a freshman business major from Lockport; Aisha Wilson, a sophomore psychology major from Orland Hills; Deanna Banks, a sophomore business management major from Chicago; and Liz Halbert, a junior speech communication major from Bloomington.

Contestants will compete for scholarships, prizes and special awards in the following categories: creative expression, African garment, talent and evening gown/impromptu questioning. In addition, special recognition awards will be presented to contestants for Ms. Congeniality, Ms. Together, Ms. Enterprise and Ms. Ebony.

The public is also invited to attend the Miss Black EIU Coronation Dance, scheduled to begin in the University Ballroom immediately following the pageant. Admission is free with the purchase of a pageant ticket or \$3 at the door.

For information, contact Ceci Brinker, Student Life, 581-3829.