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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
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news

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

GEORGE MCKENNA TO SPEAK ON EIU CAMPUS

CHARLESTON, IL--George McKenna, principal of George Washington Preparatory High School in Los Angeles, will deliver the keynote address at the fifth annual Illinois State Resident Assistant Association Conference this weekend on the Eastern Illinois University campus.

McKenna is a noted educator, community leader, lecturer, consultant and author. He gained national recognition for his leadership in successfully revitalizing a high school community in Los Angeles.

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Within four years, he changed an inner-city high school that had been torn by violence, low achievement and lack of community confidence into a school that now has an attendance waiting list, and where 90 percent of the graduates enroll in college.

These accomplishments have been featured in numerous magazine and newspaper articles and have resulted in a CBS docu-drama entitled "The George McKenna Story." McKenna is a strong advocate of building stable communities from within and will speak to resident assistants from 8:30-10:30 a.m. Saturday in the Union Grand Ballroom. A follow-up session with McKenna will be held from 11 a.m. to noon in Room 232 Coleman Hall.

Nearly 500 resident assistants from 18 Illinois and out-of-state colleges and universities, including Eastern, are expected to attend the ISRAA conference featuring a variety of workshops on such topics as staff unity, discipline, racial awareness, methods of confrontation, fundraising and drug prevention in the residence halls, according to Patty Nemmer, associate director of EIU's Weller Hall.

"The conference is designed to enhance the professional development of our paraprofessional students throughout Illinois and the surrounding states," Nemmer said.

Among the schools represented at the conference are DePaul, Ball State, Millikin, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, the University of Illinois-Chicago, Illinois Wesleyan, Illinois State, North Central College, the University of Illinois-Urbana, Bradley, Western Illinois, Northern Illinois, Southeast Missouri State, Mundelein, Quincy College, SIU-Carbondale and Rockford College.

Nemmer said 89 EIU resident assistants and 35 EIU counselors and guests will also be represented.