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September 8, 1997

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

RESERVATION DEADLINES NEAR FOR BANQUET/CHILDREN'S LATIN FEST

CHARLESTON -- In commemoration of the beginning of its fourth annual Latino Heritage Celebration, Eastern Illinois University will hold a banquet Sunday, Sept. 14, in the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union Grand Ballroom.

The banquet has become the traditional kick-off activity for the annual celebration which serves to remind individuals about the Latino culture and our country's Latino heritage.

This year's banquet will begin with a cocktail hour beginning at 6 p.m., while the dinner -- featuring delicious recipes from Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Puerto Rico -- will be served at 7 p.m. "El Grupo Latino" will perform dances from the region.

Tickets are available through Eastern's Minority Affairs Office, 113 Blair Hall. The cost is \$12 for faculty and staff, \$6 for students. Phone 581-6690 by **Wednesday, Sept. 10**, to reserve tickets. Activity sponsors include the Latino Heritage Committee and Minority Affairs.

Additional first-week activities of the four-week Latino Heritage Celebration include keynote speaker Jesus Negrete, founder and director of the Mexican Cultural Institute of Chicago. His presentation -- "500 Years of Latino History in Song" -- will include Chicano/Latino folk songs, poetry and other folk traditions as examples of how Latinos preserve history through song/legends.

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RESERVATIONS

Sponsored by the University Board, the show will begin at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 17, in the Grand Ballroom. Admission is \$1 for students with I.D. and \$3 for the general public.

Also, it is not too late to sign up for Latin Fest, a children's festival-type event to be held from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 4, at Charleston's Morton Park. For a fee of \$5 per child (\$7.50 for two), children can make their own pinatas and jewelry and participate in storytelling, percussion classes, dance classes, art classes and Spanish lessons. All children between the ages of six and 12 are invited to participate.

Phone the Charleston Recreation Department (345-6897) by **Sept. 30** to register. Latin Fest is being co-sponsored by the rec department, the Newman Catholic Center, Tarble Arts Center and the Women's Advocacy Center.