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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WEIDNER NAMED BOSS OF THE YEAR

CHARLESTON -- Terry Weidner, interim provost and vice president for academic affairs at Eastern Illinois University, calls his recent selection as Boss of the Year "clearly one of the most pleasant experiences" of his life.

"There can't be a much better feeling than knowing the people you work with respect you," Weidner said. "Usually the only time this kind of public recognition comes along is when you are dead. It's very pleasurable to receive it while you're still kicking."

Weidner received the official Boss of the Year plaque during Eastern's annual Bosses Appreciation Luncheon held Oct. 22. It was presented by last year's recipient, James Johnson, dean of the College of Arts and Humanities.

Other past recipients include James Quivey, English (1994); Larry Williams, Graduate School (1993); Sandy Ramsey, Payroll (1992); Ron Leathers, College of Education (1991); David Doss, Testing (1990); and Elmer Pullen, Financial Aid (1989).

According to Carol Strode, co-chair of this year's event, 16 bosses were

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nominated, the largest field yet in the competition's eight-year history. Civil service employees wishing to nominate their boss were asked to address five criteria: consistent consideration and support, ability to help employees find strengths and attain goals, ability to listen and communicate well, performance of actions and courtesies beyond his or her daily responsibilities and ability to support Eastern in a positive and enthusiastic manner. Employees were also encouraged to add other information they might want the selection committee to consider.

In a joint nomination form, submitted by all seven of academic affairs' civil service employees, Weidner was summarized as "the type of boss that people would want if they could choose their own boss. His unfailing good spirits and well-known sense of humor are definite assets in the workplace. He makes persons feel at ease, and is mindful at all times of what is happening in the office and at the university. His 'open door' policy makes him always available for consultation or conversation. He is our choice for Boss of the Year."

Weidner, who has been a "boss" for approximately 20 of his 33 years at Eastern, has his own ideas of who, or what, a boss should be -- "someone who makes it as easy as possible for (the employees) to do their job," he said. "Find out what a person likes to do, wants to do and is capable of doing, then utilize those skills in the performance of a particular job."

He readily admits that there is more opportunity to fit people to particular jobs

in a multi-person office, such as he is in now, than there is in an office with just one employee. He faced that situation as chairman of Eastern's botany department, a position he held for several years prior to coming to academic affairs in 1991. He said it can be done, however, as long as a boss is willing to make some adjustments to his or her own duties.

Weidner said it's important to remember that an employee's role is an important function of the office. Take his secretaries, for example. "They're the ones who really do the work of the office," he said. "If I leave for a week, I know the office will continue to run smoothly because the staff keeps it running. When a secretary goes, especially in a one-secretary office, then you've got real chaos."