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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAFETY AWARD PRESENTED TO EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

CHARLESTON -- An Award of Merit, presented to Eastern Illinois University by the National Safety Council for "excellence in safety," surprised some, even though they knew, first-hand, of Eastern's continued commitment to safety on campus.

"We've made pretty good progress in striving to be up-to-date," said Gary Hanebrink, Eastern's campus safety officer. " (But) it was our maiden voyage -- the first time we applied (for an award). What we were really looking for was a critique to get back, something that would tell us how to better ourselves even more."

The Campus Safety Division of the National Safety Council sponsors what is known as the *Complete Safety Program* which set standards against which campus safety offices can measure themselves. It also provides a stimulus for initiating and improving campus safety, and recognizing well-developed, comprehensive safety programs. It was to this program that Eastern applied.

Several aspects of Eastern's safety program were taken into consideration, including the University's safety manuals, safety awareness programs for both

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SAFETY AWARD

students and staff, standard/laboratory safety (technological and chemical), accident incident rate, radiation safety, hazardous waste and, Hanebrink said, even Eastern's Department of Environmental Health and Safety web page (<http://www.eiu.edu/~environ/>).

Review of the material was made by a group of peers, Hanebrink added.

Foster Rinefort, former chairperson of the University Environmental Health and Safety Committee, said that the entire staff and faculty of Eastern can be proud of this award. "(It) was earned in competition with other educational institutions in the United States and was awarded both because of reductions in work injuries and because of the completeness of the safety and health program at the university. Under the leadership of David Jorns, significant reductions in work injuries have occurred during each year that he has served as president. This has also occurred because of the dedication and commitment of administrators, faculty, staff, and employees over a several-year period. The earning of this award is a measure of past accomplishments and encouragement for future success."

The Award of Merit plaque presented by the National Safety Council to Eastern now hangs in a display case on the first floor of Old Main. Hanebrink said he still awaits the arrival of the promised critique sheet, which will be reviewed and studied for ideas with which to make the university campus even safer than it already is.