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University Marketing and Communications, "10/15/1990 - Rives to Seek Approval of Honorary Degree Nominations" (1990). *Press Releases*. 374.
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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Charleston, Illinois

news

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90-592

October 15, 1990

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

RIVES TO SEEK APPROVAL OF HONORARY DEGREE NOMINATIONS

CHARLESTON, IL.--Eastern Illinois University President Stan Rives will ask for Board of Governors approval to award honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degrees to Pulitzer Prize winner Gwendolyn Brooks and well known singer William Warfield at its Oct. 18 meeting in Springfield.

In other business, BOG Chancellor Thomas Layzell will recommend that the board approve naming six buildings in Eastern's University Court complex for distinguished former faculty members at EIU.

Rives will also brief the board on the inauguration of Eastern's Second Century Campaign to raise \$20 million in five years.

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Brooks and Warfield were recommended to receive the honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degrees at Eastern's December Commencement by members of the 1989-90 Faculty Honorary Degree Committee, who sought nominations from faculty, students, staff and other friends of the University.

Eligible for consideration for honorary degrees are persons with a record of major distinction in education, public service, research, humanities, business or the professions.

Brooks, an internationally honored and celebrated poet, has been Poet Laureate of Illinois for the last 18 years and in 1985 became the first Black woman to be named Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress.

In 1950, at age 32, she received the Pulitzer Prize for her book Annie Allen, and since that time has written more than 15 books of poetry and edited several others.

She has held regular teaching positions at a number of universities and colleges, and is currently at Chicago State University.

Brooks is the recipient of Johnson Publishing Company's Black Achievement Award in Fine Arts, the Poetry Society of America's Shelley Memorial Award, and the KUUMBA Liberation Award.

Warfield, an accomplished singer, actor and educator, has appeared in the motion picture Showboat, on Broadway in Regina, and as Porgy in the European production of Porgy and Bess. He has made numerous concert, radio, and television appearances and has travelled extensively throughout the world giving recitals and concerts.

A retired professor at the University of Illinois Department of Music, he currently serves as Eastern's Visiting Professor for Cultural Diversity.

He is the recipient of an honorary citation by the Eastman School of Music, his alma mater, and received a Grammy award in 1984 from the National Academy of Arts and Sciences for his recording of Aaron Copland's "Lincoln's Portrait." He was recently selected as a Lincoln Academy Laureate in the category of arts and performing arts.