

1-30-1998

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Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "01/30/1998 - Annual Dinner To Highlight EIU African Heritage Celebration.pdf" (1998). 1998. 377.

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98-37

January 30, 1998

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ANNUAL DINNER TO HIGHLIGHT EIU AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE CELEBRATION

CHARLESTON -- Eastern Illinois University's 1998 African-American Heritage Celebration -- a cultural tradition held annually to pay tribute to African-American history, culture and contributions and programs -- promises to be the largest in the university's history.

More than 30 diverse cultural, social and educational programs and 35 campus/community sponsors will be featured for the enjoyment of the EIU community and the public-at-large during the month of February.

A highlight of this year's celebration titled "Celebrating the Fabric of Our Diverse Heritage" will be the annual Heritage Dinner, scheduled for 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 8, at the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union Grand Ballroom. Featured entertainment this year will be Tarin T. Dumas-Hampton, an internationally acclaimed instructor and performer in African dance. Dumas-Hampton, who appeared in and managed three international dance companies for the Atlanta Olympics' opening and closing ceremonies, currently is an assistant professor of physical education at Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta. She has also participated in European dance tours, visiting Budapest, Hungary and Belgium.

Tickets for this year's dinner -- priced at \$12 for adults and \$5 for Eastern students (with ID) and

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children under 12 -- are available from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday at the EIU ticket office in the Union. The deadline to purchase tickets is Wednesday, Feb. 4. This year's menu will include fried chicken, roasted chicken, fried catfish, baked lemon-peppered catfish, candied yams, mixed greens, green beans and potatoes, cornbread, assorted salads and desserts.

Also as part of the month-long celebration, Eastern's Tarble Arts Center will display a cultural art exhibit -- "A Selection from the Hager Gift of African-American Folk Art" -- on loan from the Rockford Museum. This display features works of self-taught African-American folk artists from the Southeastern United States.

Other events scheduled during the week of Feb. 1 through 8 include:

- **Eastern's second annual Black Greek Council Student/Staff Basketball Challenge**, 7 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 1, McAfee Gymnasium. Free admission.
- **"Leading With Soul,"** a student leader panel discussion, 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3, Martin Luther King Jr. University Union Kansas Room. Free admission. Sponsored by Delta Sigma Theta and featuring select student leaders from throughout the campus community who will share personal insights, experiences and advice on the importance and impact of campus involvement.
- **Kummba (Creativity) Poetry Reading Contest**, 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 6, Union Rathskeller. Admission: \$1 for students with ID, \$2 for the general public. Featuring the creative writings/original works of EIU students on the celebration theme. Criteria for judging includes creativity, expression and theme. Those attending will be eligible for door prizes scheduled to be given out randomly through the night. (Students wishing to participate in the contest must register by Monday, Feb. 2, in the Student Activity Center. For information, phone 581-5117.)
- Comedian **Alonzo Hamburger Jones**, 9 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7, Union Rathskeller. Admission: \$1 for students with ID, \$3 for the general public.

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In addition, the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union will host “Heritage Daze” throughout February by featuring specials and specialty items. Monthly features will include hair salon specials, an African-American Heritage Month book display in the Union Bookstore, Rathskeller “Soul Food Buffet,” Craft Depot African jewelry and pottery craft workshops.