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For Immediate Release:

RICHARD RECEIVES EIU'S 2000 DISTINGUISHED FACULTY AWARD

CHARLESTON – Gail J. Richard, professor of communication disorders and sciences at Eastern Illinois University, has been named the 2000 recipient of the university's Distinguished Faculty Award.

The Charleston resident will be recognized for her accomplishments at the 9 a.m. commencement ceremony Saturday, May 6, in Lantz Gymnasium.

Richard, who joined Eastern's staff in 1981, expressed her pleasure at being named this year's recipient: "Being selected to receive the Distinguished Faculty Award is a great honor, as well as a humbling experience. Having chaired that committee when I served on Faculty Senate exposed me to the caliber of individuals nominated for the award. I am proud to be among them."

She added, "Eastern Illinois University is known for having excellent teachers who set high standards of quality for themselves and their students. My years at Eastern have been incredibly fulfilling professionally. This is a university which allows professors to excel in their

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areas of expertise. The most rewarding part is being involved in stimulating the evolution of students. It is very rewarding to witness the 'ripple effect' by shaping students to help future generations of their own."

The Distinguished Faculty Award is presented to a faculty member with at least four years of full-time teaching experience and who excels in teaching, research/professional development and service. The recipient receives a small monetary award, in addition to a plaque.

Richard said her monetary award will be donated to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Foundation which recently initiated a major fund drive – "Dreams and Possibilities - A Campaign for the New Century" – to generate scholarships for doctoral studies in the professions of communication disorders.

"Since this award represents an acknowledgment of my contributions as a teacher and scholar, I feel it is appropriate to channel the financial award to insure university professors for our future generations," she added.

Her peers would be the first to admit this act of generosity is representative of Richard's character.

"Gail sets an example for students who have high expectations for career success," wrote Brenda Wilson, assistant CDS professor at Eastern, in a letter of nomination. "Through her example, lessons are learned on the importance of community involvement, research and service."

She added, "(Richard) is a nationally recognized authority in our profession, yet with her very demanding schedule, she still maintains time to remain active clinically. She provides numerous consultations to families and school districts regarding difficult cases with

communication disorders. Several hours each day are spent on the telephone providing information to families who need information and support. I have never known Gail to be “too busy” to make time for those who call on her for assistance.

“(She) has many accomplishments and has made many valuable contributions to Eastern, the community and the nation. (Richard) is a role model worthy of emulation.”

Mary Anne Hanner, acting chairperson of EIU's CDS department, concurs. “Gail's service to EIU is exemplary. She has been elected to campus-wide committees such as Faculty Senate and, because of her leadership and commitment, she has been invited to serve on a number of other prestigious committees such as the master planning committee.

“Gail is (also) regarded as an expert on the topic of autism. She has a prolific record of writing and presentations associated with autism. She also provides speech and language diagnostics and consulting services to children with autism and assists parents and school districts in providing the optimum educational environments. (Richard) has been writing and publishing clinical materials in our discipline for nearly 20 years. When practitioners see her name on a product, they know that it is useful and appropriate,” Hanner wrote.

Richard's accomplishments and character have not gone unnoticed by those outside Eastern's Department of Communication Disorders and Sciences. Rich McDuffie, director of athletics at EIU, recently has worked with Richard in her role as faculty athletics representative to the NCAA and as chairperson of the Intercollegiate Athletic Board.

“In my 20 years as an athletics director, I have not had the opportunity to work with someone as committed to purpose and excellence, as is Dr. Gail Richard,” McDuffie wrote. “In my view, Dr. Richard represents the model faculty member – committed to her discipline and her students/clients, demanding of excellence in all those she works with, unquestioned integrity and an open invitation to help all those who approach her.”

NOTE:

For those wishing a photo of Dr. Richard, see <http://www.eiu.edu/~pubaff/richard.htm>.