June 3, 2007

Mr. Louis Hencken
President
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Avenue
Charleston, Illinois 61920-3099

Dr. Robert Webb
Chairperson
Eastern Illinois University Board of Trustees
600 Lincoln Avenue
Charleston, Illinois 61920-3099

Dear President Hencken and Dr. Webb:

We are contacting you in light of the recent news that Eastern Illinois University (EIU) has chosen to cancel its wrestling program effective May 17, 2007. While we deem this decision to be shocking, disturbing, disappointing and untimely, we still do not truly understand the mitigating factors for basing your decision to cancel the program.

The wrestling program has a 59 year tradition at Eastern and has turned out individuals who have gone on to become coaches, teachers, business professionals, public officials and leaders.

The EIU Athletic Administration portrays the canceling of the program to be academic performance related; however, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) uses the Academic Progress Rate (APR) program as a tool to help with the retention and graduation of athletes. Myles Brand the NCAA President has been quoted as saying, "The goal of the APR is to change behavior, not to punish."

The 2006/2007 EIU wrestling team currently has a projected APR value that will meet the NCAA and APR standards. As you can see, the wrestling program is making academic progress. We feel that the decision to cancel the program is unjust, unfair and creates a sad day for wrestling within Illinois, as well as across the country. Illinois wrestling ranks fifth in the nation for participation in the sport of wrestling.

We ask that you strongly reconsider reinstating this program that brings opportunity, pride and joy to these wrestlers, their coaches, families, and, most importantly, the reputation of Eastern Illinois University.

Wrestling builds leadership, confidence, character and the perseverance to overcome any obstacle in life. **Please do not let such a strong legacy program at EIU be lost.**

Sincerely,