How far we have come,
How far we have yet to go!

Thursday November 6, 2014
Governors State University
University Park, Illinois
www.govst.edu
The Civil Rights Act ignited a light of hope and paved the way for improved quality of life for African Americans and other minority groups. Fifty years have passed since its passage, and this light has begun to dim, with social ills that prevent us from uniting as one. Can we reestablish diverse relationships based on love for our fellow brothers and sisters in perilous times like these? We must establish and maintain meaningful relationships based on love for our fellow brothers and sisters in a supportive environment. Restorative justice offers a fundamental shift in how we think about and practice justice: facilitating collaboration, building social capital, empowering all parties in a conflict to exercise their rights and responsibilities as resourceful, skillful members. The Constitution begins, We the people of The United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice. It’s up to us to do our part to make the world a better place through love and understanding; we must stand for what is right, speak up for those without a voice, and listen and learn from others’ perspectives.

The Road to Empowerment: Suggestions for Macro-level Change
Candice Robbins
This workshop is an overview of critical consciousness and empowerment to create dialogue toward building and sustaining critical reflection and action in our communities. Paulo Freire explains that we can transform systems of oppression through education that raises awareness of social, political, and economic conditions that impact students’ lives, and connect awareness with action. Critical reflection and action requires empowerment, as individuals or groups gain control of their lives through acquisition of resources, influence, and decision-making at the individual, organizational and community levels. While university programs focus mainly on psychological empowerment, we must extend this focus to the community level: to promote and protect civil rights, challenge the status quo, and induce social change.

Exercise Your Ethnic Right
Tenille Wallace
This workshop will engage students in open discussion about ethnic identity, multicultural education, and effective policies to help students implement the changes they envision for GSU. Even after passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the struggles that US ethnic minority groups must endure are neglected. Oppression robs minorities from developing their potential as human beings, and ethnic minorities in the US grapple with perceptions of their identities formed by European Americans. Education systems can foster positive ethnic identity by joining curriculum with student experiences and creating spaces for dialogue and social action. To learn how oppression affects oppressed groups, educators need to develop dialogue on the experiences of minorities, so educators and students together can create equal educational opportunities.

The Reality of Us
Stephanie Manuel
As an African American woman with a clear understanding of the present state of our community, I believe it is crucial that we do something. Doing something is not just meeting with others who know what this state is; it is waking those who have no clue of our situation, our state, our possibilities. My oral presentation is based on the idea of attaching African Americans with the reality of reunification.
We are all human beings, born free and equal in dignity and rights, endowed with reason and conscience. King’s ‘Letter from Birmingham Jail’ addressed this sentiment to clergymen who had written an open letter critical of him and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference for their work in Birmingham. Careful, reflective study of King’s philosophy in his letter can provide us an important blueprint for recognition of human rights and dedication to ending discrimination today. As students, we have potential to be very symbolically powerful: we are the beneficiaries of the civil rights movement, we represent the movement’s hope for the future, and the world calls for greater conscience to stand up and be heard!

The Disability Rights Movement: Past, Present, and Future
Jennifer Armstrong & Stephanie Brooks

From discrimination and segregation to limited access to fair and equitable education, the disability rights movement shares many similarities with the civil rights movement. Through the model of a small town institution today, this presentation will educate attendees on the struggles faced by individuals with disabilities over the past 50 years, and invite further discussion of the possibilities for a future of equal rights guaranteed for all individuals.

Dual Identity Crisis
Maria Ramirez & Daniel Vergara

America is built on immigration, from arrivals at Ellis Island to more recent migrants from Asia and Latin America. As migration takes place, people evolve. Children grow and develop through what is familiar; their identities derive from culture, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, nationality, and race. Often in order to achieve success and assimilate into American society, immigrants must be fully immersed into American culture in a homogeneous society with competitive attitudes on education, economic status, and career. To conform to the American way and have opportunities for success, people must change: Juan becomes John, Marisol becomes Mary. In cultural clashes identity crises are born. This workshop details the history and psychological effects of the perplexity of dual identity crisis and its depiction in literature.

The Absence of Sexual Minorities in the Civil Rights Act of 1964
David Luecht

American public opinion has changed rapidly in numerous areas of LGBT rights and acceptance; this attitudinal shift accompanies recent progress on LGBT marriage equality, adoption, and military service. Underlying social stigmas through religious organizations and personal bias nevertheless still impact legislative decision-making processes through an ideal of exclusion. Legislative exclusion denies recognition of sexual orientation as a minority group and impacts LGBT persons in equal protection for healthcare, public accommodation, and housing. Prohibition of discrimination against minority groups under the Civil Rights Act, Title VII, and its subsequent revisions has offered the most comprehensive order of legal protections and rights, and yet discrimination along sexual orientation and gender identity is not written into Title VII. This workshop details possibilities and limitations of attempts to incorporate legislation void from Title VII created through the Employment Non Discrimination Act (ENDA), which has yet to successfully pass through both houses and reach the president’s desk for signature and ratification.

Student Engagement as a Transformative Experience in Higher Education
Timothy Crawford & Callie Skwiat, Robert Clay, and Tori Collins

Each presenter will discuss how their work in civic and student engagement supports the goals of social justice reform, and how each empowers students on their campuses to take actions towards social equality.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ‘FROM THE GROUND UP’
The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and a New Definition of Equal Employment Opportunity
Dr. David Hamilton Golland

Dr. Golland, the author of Constructing Affirmative Action: The Struggle for Equal Employment Opportunity (2011) and A Terrible Thing to Waste: Arthur Fletcher and the Conundrum of Black Conservatism (in progress), is Assistant Professor and Coordinator of History and Social Sciences at Governors State University.
PERFORMANCE PANEL

HOW FAR HAVE WE COME? HOW FAR HAVE WE YET TO GO?
Chair: Don Culverson

**Speak**
Ashieka Daniels, Garreth Daniels, Tonya Animashaun, Lee Kelley, Brian Ali, Susan Ali, Eric King, Linda King, and Kiarra King

‘Speak’ is a monologue designed to creatively express facts and personal beliefs on civil and equal rights. This monologue tackles the topic of social justice, including short readings, personal experiences, and literary works, alongside the artist’s original sculpture, prints, and images from the past and present. The goal is to bring insight and awareness of the struggles as well as challenges that African American men and women still endure in United States today.

**Entropy – Disorder in a Closed System**
Christopher Brennan

A visual poetry presentation precedes and inspires our discussion of a failing community, brought about by a lack of investment: of time, energy, money, and business growth. Images of burnt and falling down homes in Harvey are paired with haiku and serve as the backdrop to this question: How far have we come?

**Was this the Dream?**
David Alexander

Despite the plethora of programs and legislations at federal and state levels, the African American community has consistently failed to reap the benefits of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This presentation attempts to shine a light on the reasons behind this failure, looking at the state of the African American community today and examining the toga of perpetual victimhood in which the African American community has wrapped itself: a toga that encourages celebration of failure and demonization of attempts to accept responsibility for the community’s failures.

**Change Makers**
Lois Nemeth

My manifesto “Change Makers” was first presented as part of the “What If” Illinois Communications Theatre Association 2014 Conference, at which my fellow GSU students and I represented our university, inspiring students and faculty alike to reach out to others through theatre for social change. What if we could erase racism, famine, and war? Resolving community conflict and inspiring change starts within each of us, planting the seeds of understanding and sharing common ground. The seeds we spread are planted on good soil, and all should be nurtured equally.

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TICKETS $15 / $10 STUDENTS

SAT NOV 8th @ 7:30
CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS

SUN NOV 9th @ 2:00

A RAISIN IN THE SUN

Directed by Dr. Patrick Santoro
Presented by GSU Theatre & Performance Studies

Set in the 1950s, this is the story of an African American family on Chicago’s South Side planning to leave their crowded apartment for a home in Clybourne Park, while their efforts to ‘move up’ are thwarted by racial intolerance. Lorraine Hansberry’s award-winning play, first performed on Broadway in 1959, spotlights divisions that continue to plague Chicago more than fifty years after its premiere.

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CELEBRATION OF THE 1964 CIVIL RIGHTS ACT & FREEDOM SUMMER CONTINUES ALL YEAR LONG AT GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY

On July 2, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Civil Rights Act, the most sweeping civil rights legislation since Reconstruction. That very summer, college students organized by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee descended on Mississippi to help register African-Americans to vote. They faced intimidation and even violence: three students were murdered outside the town of Philadelphia. Governors State University is commemorating the 50th anniversary of these events throughout 2014 with a series of educational events: performances, film screenings, new curriculum, and this student conference. For further details, visit the commemoration site: http://www.davidgolland.com/1964/.

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CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS:

Ben Almassi, Lucianne Brown, Don Culverson, David Golland, Larry Levinson (chair), Patricia Robey, Sheree Sanderson & Dwight Vick