

PRESS RELEASE

Sept. 23, 2015

FROM: The Human Rights Education Institute

TO: The Media

RE: James Meredith "Walk the Talk" Oct. 16-17 Event

For Immediate Release

For Additional Information: Contact HREI at (208) 292-2359

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. The Human Rights Education Institute (HREI) proudly announced today that they will host the opening of the Walk the Talk conference featuring James Meredith. The presentation will be held at Schuler Performing Arts Center- North Idaho College's Boswell Hall on Friday, Oct. 16, doors open at 6:30pm. Contact: HREI Board of Directors, Dr. Lisa Manning, (lmanning@hrei.org).

The conference continues with Finding the Center, an action oriented human rights conference at University of Idaho, throughout the day Saturday, Oct. 17, including workshops, dinner and book signing. Workshops will be for human rights activists, educators, students, and law enforcement and public servants. Conference registration \$50.00, register at: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/finding-the-center-human-rights-conference-tickets-18564137836?aff=ehomecard> Contact: Ken Faunce (kfaunce@roadrunner.com).

Followed by a closing event Sunday, Oct. 18 in Lewiston, at Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC) at the Silverthorne Theater (Administration Building), LCSC Main Campus, 2:00 PM-3:30 PM (w/Book signing). This event is free and open to the community. Contact: Debi Fitzgerald, (defitzgerald@lcsc.edu).

Beginning, Friday, October 16th as James Meredith will engage in a dynamic discussion with local prominent figures about Civil Rights: past and present. Mr. Meredith will share his experiences during one of the most critical times in our nation's history. His memoir "*A Mission from God*, will be available for purchase and signing. James Meredith through his continued acts of courage in 1962 and beyond, gives significant relevance to us today...A man who helped changed history and America. Today rights and privileges such as, the right to attend a college of your choice and register to vote, regardless of the color of your skin, are available, due largely to the singular actions of courage and bravery demonstrated by people like James Meredith

Civil rights activist James Meredith, the first African-American to enroll at the University of Mississippi in 1962, will share his story of one person's courage and bravery in the face of bigotry and oppression during a series of lectures and break-out sessions sponsored by the Human Rights Education Institute, beginning Oct. 16.

The Human Rights Education Institute Board president stated, "HREI is pleased to join with our co-sponsors and benefactors to present this three day conference addressing civil rights issues featuring a number of outstanding experts in the field".

Robert Lee Long, an award-winning veteran journalist from Mississippi, will speak about civil rights icon James Meredith and the relevance of his life experience as a champion of civil rights in 21st century America. He will also address ongoing struggle with race and racial reconciliation.

Brian Hicks, Executive Director of the DeSoto County Museum, will speak on Meredith's attempted assassination in 1966 and his "Walk Against Fear" which was completed by Dr. Martin Luther King on his behalf.

In the words of Mr. Long, "James Meredith and his powerful story of courage and bravery in the face of bigotry and oppression is a lesson for anyone attempting to combat racial prejudice in American society. His singular, independent spirit and deep personal faith enabled him to change an inherently evil system..."

Background and History

In late September 1962, after a legal battle, James Meredith, an African-American, attempted to enroll at the University of Mississippi. Chaos briefly broke out on the University of Mississippi campus, with riots ending in two dead, hundreds wounded and many others arrested after the Kennedy administration called out some 31,000 National Guardsmen and other federal forces to enforce order.

Meredith's walk against fear in June of 1966 did not end after a gunman shot him in a failed assassination attempt. Meredith galvanized others, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to continue his journey towards equality and the right of suffrage in a free society. His walk against fear and oppression still continues today in the face of the nation's latest racial unrest. His story is a uniquely American story, and one that still resonates today."

"Many of our nation's beloved civil rights leaders are gone. Dr. King, Rosa Parks, Julian Bond and others can now only speak through old television newsreels and audio sound bites. James Meredith is living history. Students will have the rare chance to interact with a real, authentic American hero."

This three day (Friday-Sunday) conference is supported through scholarships, sponsorships and partnerships with North Idaho College, University of Idaho, The NW Coalition for Human Rights/Finding the Center, Lewis-Clark State College, Gonzaga University and Washington State University. Workshops for academic credit will be available throughout the conference. This event is made possible through grants from the Women's Gift Alliance, the Margaret Reed

Foundation and the Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations. Partners and sponsors include additional area colleges and universities as well as, local businesses and community organizations.

Friday evening tickets are \$10.00 General admission, \$5.00 Students (and free to students who go to their college/university website/scholarships available). Free admission to high school students. Tickets are available at www.jamesmeredith.eventbrite.com. Visit www.hrei.org for updates, and email info@hrei.org to be added to our mailing list to receive details about this valuable learning opportunity. For Friday Oct. 16 and Saturday Oct. 17 conference details see attached schedule/agenda.

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