FAU Libraries to Host ‘The Human Library: One World, Many Stories’ Event

BOCA RATON, Fla. (November 4, 2016) — Florida Atlantic University Libraries will present “The Human Library: One World, Many Stories” on Tuesday, Nov. 15 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Wimberly Library, 777 Glades Road, Boca Raton campus. The event encourages people from diverse backgrounds to become “books” in which they allow others to check out or borrow their “stories” to increase awareness of and tolerance for the human experience.

“The Human Library: One World, Many Stories” event mimics real library browsing. The difference is that the “books” are people and instead of reading, the people participate in conversations. The “books” will share information about themselves during “borrow” sessions.

“We want the Wimberly Library to become known as a safe place to have positive conversations to challenge stereotypes and prejudices, or just to get to know another individual’s point of view,” said Carol Hixson, dean of University Libraries at FAU.

Artie Jamison, director of FAU’s Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, has already found the experience to be invaluable serving as one of the “books.”

“I have often thought of writing a book, but the vulnerability of ‘putting it all out there’ is terrifying,” said Jamison. “I think this opportunity pushed me to work on peeling back another layer of myself and sharing it with others in a process of helping and healing.”

Jamison’s “Unapologetically Authentic” story shares some of the trials, challenges and triumphs that molded her life as a black woman and gave her courage to “live life out loud on her terms.” The Alabama native grew up during the height of the crack cocaine epidemic and in the thick of gang violence. Smart choices and hard work helped her to realize a dream that her past was not her potential.

Another book, “Serving and Protecting the Reservation,” is the story of Gina Hopkins, a woman of Puerto Rican and Dominican descent, who immersed herself in the culture of the Seminole Tribe of Florida during a decade of policing there.

“I had strict parents who were concerned back then with my career choice, but have always been supportive,” said Hopkins, who is an FAU police officer.

Prior to becoming a tribal police officer, Hopkins, a black belt in Kenpo Karate, worked in a women’s prison for the state of Florida and for the Department of Defense.

“Causing Good Trouble: Our Lives as Curriculum” is Dilys Schoorman’s story about being born a miracle child in Sri Lanka and driven throughout life to make good on her mother’s sacrifice. Schoorman’s
mother, who was diagnosed with a brain tumor when she was pregnant, was left blind after her optic nerve was cut during a life-saving procedure. Schoorman, a professor in the department of Curriculum, Culture and Inquiry at FAU, celebrates her gift of life by causing “trouble” in a “good” way: aspiring to live out a life that models the lessons of the multiculturalism she teaches in her classes on curriculum. Having witnessed violent racial/ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, she seeks to be a bridge builder and border crosser, especially on issues of race, gender and immigrant status.

“I am inspired by the courage of civil rights leaders around the world who have caused good trouble for the greater good of the public,” said Schoorman. “I see educators as having an awesome opportunity, responsibility and capacity for shaping future leaders and peacemakers who will make our world a kinder and better place.”

The Human Library movement for social change has spread to more than 60 countries since its inception in Denmark in 2001. FAU Libraries is presenting the event for the first time, but plans to host such an event annually.

For more information about “The Human Library: One World, Many Stories,” contact Carol Hixson at 561-297-3717 or hixson@fau.edu.

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Photo Caption
HumanLibrary1jpg: Book design for “The Human Library: One World, Many Stories.”

About Florida Atlantic University:
Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of $6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU’s world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of critical areas that form the basis of its strategic plan: Healthy aging, biotech, coastal and marine issues, neuroscience, regenerative medicine, informatics, lifespan and the environment. These areas provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU’s existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.