



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



"Race is so deeply embedded in our lives it appears to be the natural order of things. We must challenge that notion with all the power of our science and society."

Fall Visiting Scholar Dr. Yolanda Moses

Dr. Yolanda Moses is a professor of Anthropology and Associate Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Excellence and Equity at the university of California, Riverside, and is the Chair of the American Anthropological Association Race Advisory Board. She devoted two full days to giving presentations and workshops on Western Michigan University's campus and spoke at the September Race Initiative Community Leadership Board (CLB) meeting held at the YWCA. Her visit was hosted by the Department of Anthropology through the WMU Visiting Scholar Program.

Dr. Moses discussed the opportunity for communities to use the RACE Exhibit coming in Fall 2010 as a tool for community development. She talked about how it is important for individual communities to plan to use it in what ways work best for them. She shared her excitement and anticipation for observing how the Kalamazoo community will decide to use the exhibit for the betterment of itself.



RACE

Are We So Different?™

-Yolanda Moses, Chair, RACE Project



The RACE Exhibit Initiative is a partnership of Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, and a collaboration with over 40 regional organizations working to organize planning surrounding the RACE Exhibit.

Some of the goals of the Initiative are:

- to use the exhibit as a catalyst to stimulate broad-based, productive community dialogue on issues of race, diversity, tolerance, and social justice
- to strengthen and establish partnerships between community organizations committed to an antiracist, diverse, and tolerant region
- to develop programming that will stimulate interest in the exhibit
- to develop programming that will ultimately contribute to transforming our region through lasting discussion, knowledge, and initiatives in the community

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KALAMAZOO VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
A COMMITMENT TO LEARNING



"[Racism] is not about how you look, it is about how people assign meaning to how you look."

-Robin D.G. Kelly, Historian

Events

Stay Tuned for the January Community Leadership Board Meeting

RACE Youth Committee Continues Through Fall

Looking back on this fall, it is exciting to think of all that has happened, and all that is happening with the RACE Youth Committee! Adults are stepping back as they witness the awareness, knowledge and leadership skills of the Kalamazoo Youth. The Youth Committee continues to host deep discussions regarding issues of race, and several groups commit their time and resources to these events.

The Kalamazoo Public Library, Youth United Way, Girls in the Wild, KCIS (Promise), DALT, PeaceJam, Voter Registration, Black Arts Council, FIRE, and Future 4 Teens set up resource tables at gatherings where adults and youth alike come together to talk about Race. Short documentaries such as the clip "A Girl Like Me" from Media That Matters Film Festival are used as catalysts for discussions. The September 20th meeting concluded with an assortment of performances from local FIRE talent.

Youth Bus Trip Granted Sneak-Peak of RACE Exhibit

In the cold early morning of October 4, approximately thirty-some Kalamazoo area youth and eight chaperones gathered in a Kalamazoo Meijer parking lot. It was there that they all began their five-hour bus ride together to visit the Race Exhibit then located in Cleveland. The Race Exhibit is scheduled to be at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum in the fall of 2010, and one of the goals of the trip was for the youth to be able to experience the exhibit as some of them may be developing leadership roles with the



The group poses in front of the Cleveland RACE Exhibit

arrival of the exhibit to Kalamazoo

The Cleveland Museum of Natural History graciously admitted the young crowd and invited them all to the town hall meeting taking place in the building during the afternoon. The Museum also provided the group with a private room to use for before and after exhibit viewing activities.

It was widely expressed that the average person would need more than a few hours at this exhibit. It is full of information about the concept of race. There are displays that focus on explaining the 'biology' of race, displays providing some history of race, and displays that get the visitor involved. Many of the chaperones were impressed not only with how much the information the youth took in, but also how they were able to analyze and question the information that they saw presented. One of the girls stated, "I feel that it opened my eyes to all the hatred that goes not only to African Americans but to all races."

The visit to the Cleveland Museum ended with the town hall meeting 'What is RACE?' Dr. Yolanda Moses, Chair of the American Anthropological Association

Race Advisory Board that produced the exhibit and WMU Visiting Scholar in September 2008, was one of the presenters in attendance. The presenters spoke about how and why the RACE exhibit came about, discussed how the exhibit has been used as a tool for community work, and concluded with a question and answer period. The youth were incredible. They were the first people to rise during the Q & A session. The organizer of programming for the Cleveland exhibit recognized the entire group and asked the Kalamazoo teens to stand up. She called on them to be the group that finally brings about an end to racism.

Even after the youth and chaperones boarded the bus for the five-hour trip back to Kalamazoo, the examination of race continued. Many short videos were played after the sun went down. Some of the videos shown were A Girl Like Me, (Hate) Machine, Rules of the Game, and Slip of the Tongue – the decidedly most popular video on the bus.



Some youth interact with a display at the RACE Exhibit

New Structure for the RACE Initiative

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion will be assuming responsibility for the Race Initiative beginning in January. Dr. Martha Warfield was named by WMU President John M. Dunn to be the director of the Office of Diversity & Inclusion and asked her to oversee a number of University initiatives including implementation of WMU's Diversity and Multiculturalism Action Plan; management of University affairs for the Kalamazoo Promise; presentation of the 2010 exhibit, "RACE: Are We So Different?"; planning of the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation; and community development activities relating to recruitment of students. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Warfield has been the director of the Division of Multicultural Affairs since 1992 and was promoted to assistant vice president for student affairs in 2002. In 2004, she was tapped to head a presidential initiative on diversity. The KCF grant-funded part-time Community Outreach Coordinator (Zarinah El-Amin) and part-time Youth Coordinator (Sarah Drumm) will continue in their present capacities in the Office of Diversity & Inclusion and other plans will be presented at the January meeting of the CLB. In the meantime, an opportunity to prepare a grant to the WK Kellogg Foundation to support planning and preparation for the RACE Exhibit is now being undertaken and it is hoped that information relative to this funding possibility will be available for the January meeting as well.