



News Release

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Workshop/Lecture to Kick Off Black History Month Observances Feb. 12

KEUKA PARK, N.Y.—Award-winning writer, cultural educator, and student motivator John Leonard Harris will lead a workshop and present at lecture at Keuka College Saturday, Feb. 12.

Part of the College's observance of Black History Month, the workshop, "Leaving Them Hanging: Why Predominantly White Colleges Fail to Retain Minority Students," begins at 4 p.m. in the Brezinsky Room (Dahlstrom Student Center). The lecture, "If Dr. King Was Alive Today?" begins at 7:30 p.m. in Norton Chapel. Both events are free and open to the public.

"If Dr. King Was Alive Today" offers a look at Martin Luther King Jr.'s sources of inspiration, his philosophy and accomplishments, and the keys to his legacy—conviction and commitment. It also discusses the current state of race relations, the civil rights movement, and the struggle for racial and social justice.



Harris is the founder and president of Encouragement Unlimited Inc., a non-profit organization that offers educational, motivational, and relational programs to organizations and agencies across the country that serve low-income, inner city, and at-risk populations.

"The ultimate goal of the organization is to create an 'army of encouragers' who will be active agents of hope and renewal for people who are the forgotten, undervalued, unappreciated and disadvantaged in our world," said Harris.

Harris penned "The Portrayal of the Black Family in Prime-time Network Tele vision: A Look at Stereotypic Images and Disorganization of Family Structure," published in the *Journal of Intergroup Relations* in 1992 and awarded Article of the Year by the National Association for Human Rights Workers (Nashville, Tenn.). He also penned "Black Racial Identity: The Continuing Search for 'Self,'" published in the *Journal of Intergroup Relations* in February 2000.

A native of St. Louis, Mo., and resident of Lincoln, Neb., Harris earned a bachelor of arts degree in speech and dramatic arts from the University of Missouri. He has given lectures, hosted workshops and trainings for Augstana College, Drake College, the National Campus Recreation Association, and the State Farm Insurance Companies, among others.

Harris has performed as a coffeehouse singer, actor, and stand-up comedian.

(more)

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The Keuka workshop and lecture are sponsored by the multicultural, student affairs, and president's offices.

Other Black History Month observances include three showings of the 2004 film, *Ray*: Feb. 25 at 8:30 p.m., Feb. 26 at 9:30, and Feb. 28 at 6:30 p.m. in the Lucretia Davis Jephson Science Center, room 104.

"The 2005 Black History Month theme is the Niagara Movement," said Montrose Streeter, assistant dean of students. "The Niagara Movement started in 1905 in Niagara Falls and was a precursor to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Black History Month began as Negro History Week in 1926, with the father of black history Carter G. Woodson, and was celebrated the second week of February in honor of Frederick Douglass' and Abraham Lincoln's birthdays. It became a month-long celebration in 1976."

For more information on the workshop/lecture or other Black History Month observances at the College, contact the Office of Multicultural Affairs at (315) 279-5225.