

8th NIAGARA SOCIAL JUSTICE FORUM

Saturday, January 31, 2015

Brock University

Putting the Act in Activism

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| 9:00 - 9:50 AM | Registration, Greetings and Welcome | Isaacs |
| 10:00 - 11:20 AM | SESSION 1 | |
| S.O.S. - Supporting Our Sisters: Three Native Women Trying to Make a Difference <i>Presented by Sherri Vansickle, Jessica Turgeon, Jessica Riel-Johns</i> | The three presenters will discuss issues surrounding the missing and murdered Native women in Canada, which are both institutional and societal, involving the police, courts, and media. We will also explore the negative and prejudicial attitudes toward Native women, who are being marginalized, targeted and disposed of in alarming numbers. Presenters will draw on the work of Families of Sisters in Spirit, the Niagara Chapter of Native Women, October 4 th , #AM I NEXT?, Amnesty International, and other groups to identify some plans of action with the goal of inspiring participants to act. | PL 409 |
| Getting Your Message Out: How to Effectively Engage with Media <i>Presented by MJ Deschamps and Carissa Taylor</i> | A journalist and a leader in student politics will help participants develop tangible skills for communicating a social justice message through the traditional news media, as well as different forms of social media. Participants will learn the kind of things reporters are looking for from advocacy groups and nonprofits when covering stories (e.g., interviewees, press releases). Additionally, advice and tips on how to frame a message to garner widespread support will help participants build a profile, make connections, and develop a support base for their cause. | PL 410 |
| Poverty in Niagara - A Call to Action <i>Presented by members of the Niagara Poverty Reduction Network</i> | The Niagara Poverty Reduction Network (NPRN) provides leadership in informing and changing attitudes about poverty, sharing ideas, resources and information to leverage resources, collaborate and maximize the opportunities for community engagement. Participants in this session will take part in an interactive workshop that outlines the issue of poverty in Niagara, the causes of poverty (including systemic issues), factors affecting poverty, solutions to poverty and the cost poverty has on the community. The session will identify specific ways that business, service groups, educators, faith groups, health care professionals and individuals can support poverty reduction in their community. | TA 307 |
| The Council of Canadians: Just Doing It! <i>Presented by the South Niagara Chapter, Council of Canadians</i> | The Council of Canadians is a non-partisan organization that advocates for clean water, fair trade, green energy, health care and vibrant democracy. Workshop participants will be invited to join with local activist members of the South Niagara Chapter to review several of their social justice and environmental campaigns as they have tried to impact and influence local government and other decision makers. Participants will then have the opportunity to try their own hand at planning and mapping out the action steps to conduct a local social justice / environmental campaign. | TA 309 |
| 11:30 AM - 12:50 PM | Lunch and Information Fair | Isaacs |
| 1:00 - 2:20 PM | SESSION 2 | |
| Addressing Mental Health Issues through an Applied Theatre Performance/Workshop <i>Presented by the students of DART 3F93, Social Issues Theatre for Community Engagement</i> | How we treat each other on the micro level is always a social justice issue. Students from <i>DART 3F93 Social Issues Theatre for Community Engagement</i> , under the direction of Joe Norris, have devised a performance/workshop that addresses how daily behaviours can positively or negatively contribute to the state of one's mental health. Themes include stress, healthy choices, systemic forces, creating a caring and playful environment and support for self and Others. In the dialogic tradition of Mirror Theatre, the session will begin with a presentation of vignettes, followed by a short audience participation session. Then the audience will break into discussion groups with the Actor/Researcher/Teachers who will report back in a plenary session with comments and/or new scenes. The degree of participation is the choice of each attendee. | ST 105 Schmon Tower |
| Seeds of Ecological Justice: Education Campaign on Food Security and | This workshop aims to raise awareness about ecological justice, biodiversity, and the injustices of seed privatization at a time when over a billion people are starving. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about, judge, and act in | PL 409 |

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| <p>Biodiversity <i>Presented by Development and Peace</i></p> | <p>support of small-scale agriculture, food sovereignty, and a more just Canadian and international food system. Educational resources and a petition about Canada's international aid policies affecting small family farmers in the Global South will be available to those who wish to participate in the movement for ecological justice, which is being promoted by groups, including Development and Peace (Caritas Canada), Oxfam, Seeds of Diversity, and USC Canada.</p> | |
| <p>Activist Photography 101 <i>Presented by Jo-Anne McArthur</i></p> | <p>Award-winning photojournalist Jo-Anne McArthur will offer tips and tricks on how to take better photos and will discuss the importance of photography in activist and social justice movements. More specifically, the workshop will prepare people to use photography to shift perspectives and draw attention to animal abuse and exploitation, skills that can be applied equally to other social justice concerns. Participants are invited to bring their cameras.</p> | PL 410 |
| <p>Students Organizing in the Migrant Worker Community <i>Presented by Pablo Godoy and Students Against Migrant Exploitation</i></p> | <p>Migrant workers in Canada are amongst the most vulnerable workers. Students Against Migrant Exploitation (S.A.M.E.) presents this interactive workshop on the history and current status of migrant workers in Canada, especially Niagara, including first-hand testimonials about living and working conditions. Participants will learn about the efforts of S.A.M.E. to reduce the exploitation, isolation and racism workers experience and to advance workers' rights. The workshop will include a call to action, and feature musical performances to demonstrate to potential of the arts to raise awareness of workers' rights.</p> | TA 307 |
| <p>2:30 - 3:50 PM</p> | <p>SESSION 3</p> | |
| <p>Palestine: It's Not Complicated <i>Presented by End the Occupation Niagara</i></p> | <p>For years, critics of the Israeli occupation of Palestine have been labeled anti-Semites, or faced difficulties organizing because of the belief that the conflict was either "just about religion" or too complicated to understand. In this workshop, participants will be given facts and resources to counter these arguments, to help build a stronger movement to find a just and lasting peace. Topics include a brief history of colonialism in the region, the roots of Zionism, U.S. and Canadian support of Israel, the rise of fascism in Israel, an overview of the peace talks and why they broke down, the necessity of a peaceful co-existence of Palestine and Israel, and ways to support the Palestinian struggle.</p> | PL 409 |
| <p>Ending Sexual Violence at Brock and Beyond <i>Presented by Brock Student Sexual Violence Support Centre</i></p> | <p>The Brock Student Sexual Violence Support Centre (A Safer Brock) works to raise awareness around issues of sexual violence and educate for social change. The focus of this workshop is on consent and healthy relationships. Topics include safe sex, sexual violence, and how to establish consent in a variety of relationships, including dating. Participants will learn strategies to help end sexual violence, such as volunteer roles in advocacy, support-line work, public outreach and the Men In Violence Prevention (MVP) program.</p> | PL 410 |
| <p>Creating and Sustaining Revolutionary Youth Work <i>Presented by Rachel Dietrich</i></p> | <p>This workshop examines pressures on young people and staff in modern, institutional care systems and tactics for subverting domination while working to reclaim the revolutionary potential inherent to offering care. The presenter will summarize her research in a youth shelter and will then lead participants in sharing struggles and skills for understanding caregiving within its larger social context, dismantling the systemic forms of injustice that manifest within care systems, and creating community amongst individuals immersed or invested in care-giving.</p> | TA 307 |
| <p>Community Arts Zone: Hopes, Pitfalls, and Lessons Learned in Community Engagement <i>Presented by members of the Community Arts Zone and the Social Justice Research Institute, Brock University</i></p> | <p>The goal of this workshop will be to have an honest, informative sharing session on community-researcher relationships in the Niagara region and the co-research process that takes place when university researchers engage community organizations in their work. Focusing in on a specific study, Community Arts Zone, we will explore questions about what is at stake with community engagement. What is community-engaged research? What are some challenges and opportunities? What can we learn from each other's experience? What are our hopes and hesitations about future work?</p> | TA 309 |
| <p>4:00 - 6:00 PM</p> | <p>Open Mic and Refreshments</p> | Isaacs |
| <p>7:00 - 9:00 PM</p> | <p>Documentary: <i>Made In Bangladesh</i> and talk by Producer and Director, Lysanne Louter</p> | Niagara Artists Centre |