
Created and led by: Winona State University History Professors John Campbell and Tomas Tolvaisas; Alex Hines, Director of the Winona State University Office of Inclusion and Diversity; and Joe Morse, Civil Rights Veteran
DATE: May 23, 2014

TO: Leaders and Friends of the Civil Rights Movement

FROM: Scott R. Olson, President
Winona State University

On behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of Winona State University, we thank you for your leadership in and support of the Civil Rights Movement and for your hospitality to our students who are visiting you and learning about the momentous changes you helped lead.

A group of Winona State students led by faculty members John Campbell, Tomas Tolvaisas, Alex Hines, and Winona resident and civil rights veteran Joe Morse will be participating in the 50th Anniversary Celebrations and Commemorations of the Freedom Summer in Mississippi. Their journey will also include learning about important civil rights episodes in Tennessee and Alabama.

As part of their travels, our students will meet and interact with many unsung heroes of the Civil Rights Movement. Through these encounters, we hope to honor the courage and foresight of those in the Movement who put their lives on the line to bring freedom and equality to our land.

This study experience will open the eyes of these college students who grew up so far from the heart of the movement, and perhaps it will encourage them to start and organize their own movements for progressive change in the years ahead.

So, thank you for your leadership and service and for everything you have done to make this a better world, and thank you for your hospitality as they learn from you all these years later. Although America still has not become the Promised Land, it is a much better place thanks to your efforts in the Movement. Through your efforts today to educate the future generation of leaders, we can hope that someday, if we keep our eyes on the prize, we will finally arrive.
PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

Name                      Major                        Hometown
Patricia J. Abt            Law and Society               Viroqua, Wi.
Sarah L. Anderson          Law and Society               Savage, Mn.
Sarah M. Anderson          Social Science-History Teaching   Rochester, Mn.
Kasey Bruuha               Social Science-History Teaching   La Crosse, Wi.
Jessica R. Eling           Law and Society               Lakeland, Mn.
Jordan L. Gerard           Journalism                    Spring Grove, Mn.
Jessica L. Hepinstall      History                      Rochester, Mn.
Haley M. Krautbauer        Social Science-History Teaching   Pine City, Mn.
Nicholas B. Lee            Social Science-History Teaching   Rochester, Mn.
Hunter N. Lyght            Law and Society               Fennimore, Wi.
Hannah R. McDonah          Social Science-History Teaching   Tremepealeau, Wi.
Samantha M. Paulson        Social Science-History Teaching   Sauk Rapids, Mn.
Mackenzie H. Pochardt      Social Science-History Teaching   Mendota Heights, Mn.
Casey P. Schultz           Professional Studies           Caledonia, Mn.
Raymond C. Shoup           Computer Science              Houston, Tx.
Tyler M. Stern             Social Science-History Teaching   Waterford, Wi.
Andrew K. Wangen           History                      Austin, Mn.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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WSU President Scott Olson; WSU Professors Tamara Berg, Colette Hyman, Mary Jo Klinker, James Reineke, Nicholas Wysocki, Jim Schul; Winona State History and Education Studies Departments; WSU Travel Studies Committee; WSU’s Program in Women and Gender Studies; WSU’s CLASP Lecture Series; WSU’s Krueger Library’s Athenaeum Series; Shorenna Abesadze

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BACKGROUND

For a number of years, Joe Morse, Winona resident, long-time community organizer/activist and Civil Rights veteran, and Alex Hines, Director of the WSU Office of Inclusion and Diversity, urged Professors John Campbell and Tomas Tolvaisas to create a Civil Rights Travel Study program. In December of 2012, with an eye on the upcoming 50th Anniversary of Mississippi’s 1964 Freedom Summer, Professors Campbell and Tolvaisas accepted the Morse-Hines challenge, recognizing that this anniversary would be a propitious time to introduce students to the Civil Rights Movement. However, what started as an examination of Freedom Summer blossomed into a much broader inquiry into the Movement’s richness, complexity, and organizational diversity, hence, the program’s equally important focus on civil rights efforts, episodes, and individuals in Alabama and Tennessee. In order to fully prepare for the program, as well as to establish their bona fides with prospective student participants, Campbell and Tolvaisas took an 11-day scouting trip to these three states in June of 2013 to meet people involved in the Civil Rights Movement and/or the ongoing interpretation of it, to visit locales where key episodes occurred, and, in general, to acquire an experiential, site-based knowledge of the Movement. The gathered material, combined with seemingly endless rounds of reading, writing, discussion, and oral presentations during the 2013-2014 academic year, has resulted in this travel study opportunity. While the program includes traditional in-class summer school activities, the traveling portion goes from June 16 to June 30. Students, we hope, by engaging with numerous Civil Rights Veterans and current activists/interpreters of the struggle and by visiting key sites in these Southern states will acquire rich knowledge: of the Movement, of how grass roots organizing and social change happens, and of contemporary and ongoing, if-under-the-radar, civil rights challenges. The following list of locations/sites/activities is a selective, rather than a complete, itinerary, while the lists of veterans and current activists are nearly comprehensive. We apologize for any errors or omissions. — John Campbell and Tomas Tolvaisas

LOCATIONS, SITES, ACTIVITIES, AND SCHEDULE

June 17, Clinton, Tennessee: Green McAdoo Cultural Center
June 17-18, New Market, Tennessee: Highlander Research and Education Center
June 18-20, Birmingham, Alabama: Kelly Ingram Park; Sixteenth Street Baptist Church; Birmingham Civil Rights Institute
June 20-22, Meridian, Mississippi: Site of CORE/COFO Office and Community Center; First Union Missionary Baptist Church; George Smith Tribute; “50th Annual Mississippi Civil Rights Martyrs Memorial Service, Conference, Caravan, and March for Justice”
June 21-22, Philadelphia, Mississippi: Neshoba County Courthouse; Mount Nebo Missionary Baptist Church
June 21-22, Neshoba County, Mississippi: Rock Cut Road; Mount Zion United Methodist Church; “50th Annual Mississippi Civil Rights Martyrs Memorial Service”
June 22, Selma, Alabama: Edmund Pettus Bridge; Brown Chapel AME Church
June 22-24, Montgomery, Alabama: Troy Univ. Rosa Parks Museum; Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Parsonage Museum
June 24, White Hall, Alabama: Lowndes County Interpretive Center; SNCC House
June 24, Lowndes County, Alabama: Viola Liuzzo Memorial; Jefferson Davis Highway; Old Jail in Hayneville
June 24-29, Jackson, Mississippi: Medgar Evers Home; Tougaloo College; Jackson State University; “Mississippi Freedom Summer 50th Anniversary Conference”
June 27, Cleveland, Mississippi: Amzie Moore House
June 27, Money, Mississippi: Bryant’s Grocery and Meat Market
June 27, The Mississippi Delta: Fannie Lou Hamer sites (Ruleville); Tallahatchie County Courthouse (Sumner); B. B. King Museum and Interpretive Center (Indianola); Emmett Till Museum (Glendora)
June 29, Memphis, Tennessee: National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel
CIVIL RIGHTS VETERANS WHO SPOKE TO THE STUDENTS AND THEIR CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVITIES

Alex Hines, Winona, Minnesota: a student of color, helped to de-segregate the public schools of Spartanburg, South Carolina

Joe Morse, Winona, Mn.: 1964 Freedom Summer volunteer and CORE staff Meridian, Ms.; organized voter registration, MFDP, desegregation, direct actions, and national marches from 1964-67 in Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana

Sarah Collins Rudolph, Birmingham: severely injured in the Sept. 15, 1963 Klan bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church; marched with Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth

George Rudolph, Birmingham: helped de-segregate Birmingham public facilities; Vietnam War vet

Clifton Casey, Birmingham: Birmingham's Children's Campaign, 1963

Janice Kelsey, Birmingham: Birmingham's Children's Campaign, 1963

Roscoe Jones, Meridian: Participated in 1964 Freedom Summer and Freedom School, president of the Mississippi Student Union and youth chapter of Meridian NAACP; sit-ins; 1965 Selma March

Sadie Clark Martin, Meridian: 1964 Meridian Freedom School student; one of the five students to de-segregate Meridian High School in 1965-1966

Louise Smith, Ft. Wayne, Indiana: active in de-segregating public accommodations in Meridian; helped get the first Black police officers hired in Meridian

Annie Pearl Avery, Selma: SNCC field secretary for five years, worked on voter registration and organizing demonstrations in Georgia, Virginia, Mississippi, Alabama

Joanne Bland, Selma: participated in the “Bloody Sunday” march of 3/7/1965 in Selma and the “Turn Around Tuesday” march on 3/9/1965; youngest civil rights activist to have been jailed during that period

Curt Carrington, Selma: Dallas County Movement participant; attended Tabernacle Baptist Church Mass Meetings

Lynda Lowery, Selma: 12 year old student in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery March

Jeannie Graetz, Montgomery: Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956; house was bombed during the boycott

Rev. Robert Graetz, Montgomery: Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956; Secretary of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA); Rosa Parks and Rev. Martin Luther King associate

Minnie McCants Harris: as a 15 year old, sent by the MIA to attend Highlander with her group, the Montgomery Gospel Trio; sit-ins; voter registration; sang at Mass Meetings

Georgette Norman, Montgomery: Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956

Dr. Gwendolyn Patton, Montgomery: youth leader for the MIA and SCLC; organizer for SNCC; first female student body president at Tuskegee University

Catherine Coleman-Flowers, Montgomery and Lowndes County: grew up in a prominent Lowndes County civil rights activist family

John Jackson, White Hall: Lowndes County high school student involved with SNCC and Lowndes County Freedom Organization; former Mayor of White Hall

Sheyann Webb Christburg, Dallas County: one of the youngest participants in the Selma marches of 1965 and author of Selma, Lord, Selma: Girlhood Memories of the Civil-Rights Days

Elbert Means, Lowndes County: civil rights activist in Lowndes County

Mary McDonald, Lowndes County: grew up in a Lowndes County civil rights family

Jan Hillegas, Jackson: CORE 1963-64 Syracuse, NY; NAACP Jackson 1963; COFO 1964-1965 Jackson; Freedom Information Service Mississippi Newsletter 1967-68

Margaret Block, Cleveland, Ms.: member of the SCLC and field secretary for SNCC; participated in the Delta's Citizenship Schools and 1964 Freedom Summer projects

CURRENT ACTIVISTS/EDUCATORS/INTERPRETERS/TOUR GUIDES WHO SPOKE WITH THE STUDENTS

Joe Morse, Winona, Mn.-based grass-roots organizer for equality, several environmental justice groups, and preventing violence to women in 4 states

Alex Hines, Winona: as Director of the Winona State University Office of Inclusion and Diversity, he works tirelessly at empowering students to challenge themselves, to break down barriers, and to succeed in and out-side of the classroom

Stephanie McAninch: Highlander Research and Education Center, New Market, Tn.

Susan Williams: Highlander Research and Education Center, New Market, Tn.

Dr. Tracy Snape: Dept. of Political Science, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

Ahmad Ward: Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Head of Education and Exhibitions

Samuel Pugh: Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Outreach Coordinator

Laura Anderson: Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Archivist

Barry McNealy: Birmingham Civil Rights Tour Guide

Richard Coleman, Newton, Ms.: NAACP in Mississippi counties of Lauderdale and Newton; helped get Meridian schools under Federal court order to improve conditions for Black students

John Steele, formerly of Longdale, Ms.: forced to leave Neshoba County in 1990’s as a result of his activities on behalf of Black people being unjustly arrested; organizer of “50th Annual Mississippi Civil Rights Martyrs Memorial Service”

Joanne Bland: Selma, “Journeys of the Soul” Civil Rights tours

Kimberly Smitherman: Selma, “Journeys of the Soul” Civil Rights tours

Ann Clemons: Montgomery, Civil Rights tours

Georgette Norman: Director, Troy University Rosa Parks Museum, Montgomery

Catherine Coleman-Flowers: long-time activist; associated with the Equal Justice Initiative (Montgomery) and Alabama Center for Rural Enterprise (Lowndes County)

Lecia Brooks: Montgomery, Civil Rights Memorial Center at Southern Poverty Law Center

Mary McDonald, Lowndes County, Environmental Activist

Elbert Means: Lowndes County, Activist and Elected Official

Dr. Daphne R. Chamberlain: Jackson, Historian and Director of the Council of Federated Organizations Civil Rights Education Center

Jan Hillegas: Jackson, Chair of the Mississippi Green Party; currently active in a variety of issues around West Jackson

Margaret Block: Cleveland, Civil Rights Tour Guide