

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Bill Richards / (517) 432-0013 / BillR@wkar.org
Tony Cepak / (517) 884-4743 / cepak@wkar.org

For Release 6/12/14

'Freedom Summer' Featured at Evening at WKAR and Project 60/50

(East Lansing, MI) – Revisit 1964 and the dramatic struggle for equality in Mississippi, when Evening at WKAR returns with a screening and conversation about **Freedom Summer**, the new documentary from **AMERICAN EXPERIENCE**.

The **Evening at WKAR** takes place **Wednesday, June 18 at 7 p.m.** at WKAR in the Communication Arts and Sciences building on the Michigan State campus. This is a free presentation in partnership with **Project 60/50** at MSU. Online reservations are required at WKAR.org.

The evening begins with a screening of a short portion of the film, and continues with conversation with Lansing-area residents who were part of the civil rights movement during those turbulent times: Willard Walker, Rev. John Baumgartner, Milton Powell, Judy Karandjeff and moderator Lynn Jondahl.

About 'AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: Freedom Summer'

During the summer of 1964, the nation's eyes were riveted on Mississippi. Over 10 memorable weeks known as Freedom Summer, more than 700 student volunteers joined with organizers and local African Americans in an historic effort to shatter the foundations of white supremacy in the nation's most segregated state. Working together, they canvassed for voter registration, created Freedom Schools, and established the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, with the goal of challenging the segregationist state Democratic Party at the national convention in Atlantic City. The campaign was marked by sustained and deadly violence, including the notorious murders of three civil rights workers, countless beatings, the burning of 35 churches and the bombing of 70 homes and Freedom Houses.

About the Moderator and Panelists

Lynn Jondahl was active in the civil rights movement in the 60s and participated in the March on Selma in 1965. He served as Michigan Representative from East Lansing for 22 years, was executive director of the Michigan Prospect for Renewed Citizenship and served as co-director of the Michigan Political Leadership Program at MSU. Jondahl is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ.

Willard Walker is senior policy consultant at Public Policy Associates. He has worked on anti-racism, diversity, and civil rights issues throughout his career, including serving as assistant director of the Birmingham Alabama Urban League. He's a former director of Human Relations and Community Services for the City of Lansing, and was the recipient of the first Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Legacy Award, presented by the Greater Lansing Area Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission.

-- MORE --



-- CONTINUED --

Rev. John Baumgartner is Pastor Emeritus of First Congregation United Church of Christ in Grand Ledge. He spent time in Mississippi for the National Council of Churches working with students doing voter registration the summer of 1964, which he calls a defining life experience for him. Baumgartner served churches in Warren and Richmond, Mich., before becoming the longest serving pastor in Grand Ledge.

Milton Powell is a retired professor of American Thought & Language and Justin Morrill College at MSU. In the summer of 1965, he taught U. S. history courses at Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi, as part of MSU's Student Tutorial Education Project (STEP). Powell was also active in working for open housing in East Lansing.

Judy Karandjeff is advocacy vice president for the League of Women Voters of Michigan. In 1965, as a college student at Southern Methodist University in Texas, she spent time working with voter registration groups and participated in the March on Selma. Karandjeff is a former director of the Michigan Women's Commission and Planned Parenthood.

On the Air

AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: Freedom Summer airs Tuesday, June 24, 2014, 9:00-11:00 p.m. on PBS WKAR 23.1.

About Project 60/50

Michigan State University facilitates a year-long community conversation on civil and human rights. Learn more at inclusion.msu.edu

WKAR is part of Michigan State University's College of Communication Arts and Sciences and includes WKAR TV, WKAR Radio, WKAR.org, WKAR Radio Reading Service and WKAR Ready To Learn Service. WKAR is funded in large part by community viewer and listener contributions with additional support from Michigan State University and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

#####

