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Introduction

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Introduction

Julius Amin

The idea of a symposium on race developed within a historical context of several recent events, including the nationwide racial crises beginning with Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014, and the subsequent emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement. Amid these “headline” events was a lingering dissatisfaction of black students on the University of Dayton campus, a lack of understanding of America’s racial past, the experiences of black and white participants in the African immersion program, and my belief as faculty and coordinator of Africana Studies that we are not doing nearly enough to address the problems of race, privilege, diversity, and inclusion on campus. Following consultation with numerous colleagues among faculty and staff, it was concluded that the time for a symposium on race at UD had arrived. Soon afterwards, a planning committee was put together and members agreed that a symposium would help to focus attention of the larger university community on the seriousness of the problems of racism and marginalization on campus. We went to work and, as we say in my profession, “the rest is history.” The goal of the symposium was to study the history of race relations at the University, to understand a sense of trends and attitudes, and to outline potential steps toward building a more inclusive community. The Symposium was

designed to educate, inform, and bring to the forefront conversations of race on campus. Speakers included administrators, faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Attendees came from all over campus and from the local community. The planning and execution of the symposium resulted from collaboration, boldness, ingenuity, and commitment.