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Closer to Home

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News of human rights violations often brings to mind war zones and Third World countries. Students at the University of Dayton hope to change that reaction and bring the issue closer to home.

"When talking about human rights, there's always been a global emphasis," said UD senior Erin Aldrich, co-chair of Human Rights Week on campus. "We're trying to show people you don't have to look far outside of the city to find human rights issues."

UD students have put together a slate of local providers of health care, financial services, housing and education to address the theme of "Human Rights at Home" during Human Rights Week Feb. 3-8.

Author and New York Law School professor Brandt Goldstein will deliver the week's keynote address at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 7, in the Kennedy Union ballroom. He plans to relate his book, *Storming the Court*, to today's headlines about the U.S. detention facility in Guantanamo, Cuba.

Storming the Court is the true story of law students and human rights lawyers who took two United States presidents to court to free innocent Haitian refugees detained at Guantanamo Bay in the early 1990s. Goldstein's address is free and open to the public.

Each day's activities focus on a specific topic. Each day will begin at noon with a presentation by UD faculty and students, followed by short films from around the world and concluding at 7 p.m. with a panel discussion from local experts.

UD students Anna Young, Lisa Minnot and Danielle Kusner are scheduled to present at noon Thursday, Feb. 7, in the Kennedy Union Torch Lounge on the potential use of microcredit — the extension of very small loans to the poor — in urban areas.

"The events focus a lot on what can you do locally in your city to address human rights concerns," Aldrich said.

Started by UD's human rights program — the first such undergraduate program in the nation — the student-run Human Rights Week aims to engage students in social justice issues locally and globally.

In 2006, the annual event received high praise from Louise Arbour, the United Nations high commissioner for human rights.

"Your Human Rights Week sets an example for other human rights programs at ... other universities," Arbour wrote in a letter. "Human rights can be truly realized only if their promotion and protection start at the community level."

The following is a complete schedule of events, which are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted:

Feb. 3

3 p.m., 119 Miriam Hall: A preview of the week's activities with discussion on the documentary film, *Street Children of Kinshasa*, with Gilbert Mulamba, a musician from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

5:30 p.m., Miriam Atrium: Reception, by invitation only

Feb. 4

Noon, Kennedy Union Torch Lounge: UD professor Vernellia Randall presents "Health of African-Americans as a Violation of International Human Rights."

1-2:30 p.m., KU Torch Lounge: 30-minute films; *The Hospice*, *Crisis Control*, and *Malaria: The Fever Wars*.

5 p.m., KU ballroom: Kelly Callahan from the Carter Center — the human rights organization founded by former U.S. president Jimmy Carter — speaking on neglected tropical diseases.

7 p.m., KU ballroom: Panel discussion on local health care issues with representatives from Miami Valley Hospital and ReachOut.

Feb. 5

Noon, KU Torch Lounge: UD faculty presentation on educational issues.

1-2:30 p.m., KU Torch Lounge: 30-minute films; Educating Yaprak, Yemeni Futures and The Real Leap Forward.

7 p.m., KU ballroom: Panel discussion on "Education and Human Rights in Dayton."

Feb. 6

Noon, KU Torch Lounge: UD faculty presentation on housing issues.

1-2 p.m., KU Torch Lounge: 30-minute films; Warming Up in Mongolia and Slum Futures.

7 p.m., KU ballroom: Panel discussion on "Human Rights and Housing in Dayton" with local fair housing advocates and government officials.

Feb. 7

Noon, KU Torch Lounge: UD student panel discussion of microcredit in the United States and abroad.

7 p.m., KU ballroom: Keynote speaker Brandt Goldstein, lawyer and author of Storming the Courts to present "Making a Difference at Home: How Law Students Shut Down the First Guantanamo Prison."

Feb. 8

3 p.m., KU Torch Lounge: UD Economics Honors Society debate on whether modern nations have an obligation to ensure citizens achieve health, knowledge and a decent standard of living.

6 p.m., KU Barrett Dining Hall: Career panel dinner. E-mail Julie Salomone at salomoja@notes.udayton.edu to reserve a ticket.

Feb. 4-8

6 p.m., Art Street studios: Ongoing display.