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SU LIBRARIES TO HOST ANNUAL HUMAN LIBRARY EVENT APRIL 5; BOOK VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Syracuse University Libraries will host its fourth annual Human Library event on Wednesday, April 5, from noon to 4 p.m. in Bird Library. Participants will have the opportunity to talk to “human books”: volunteers from the Syracuse University community who represent a variety of cultural backgrounds, areas of expertise and life experiences. Human books will engage in conversation with participants in one-on-one or small group conversations for 20 minutes at a time.

The event is open to campus and community. No preregistration is required; however, there will be an opportunity to reserve a book for a specific time in advance, if desired.

The aim of the program is to promote an appreciation of diversity, to challenge stereotypes and to foster inclusion and understanding. A human library encourages people from different backgrounds to talk with and learn from each other in a safe and supportive environment.

Previous human book topics have included Native American, Chinese, Indian, Nigerian and Egyptian cultures; transgender and biracial identity; military life; mental health issues; and living and traveling internationally. Feedback from human books and readers alike has been uniformly positive, with conversations described as rewarding, fun, important and interesting.

Event organizers are currently seeking Syracuse University faculty, staff and students to serve as human books; the deadline to apply at <http://tinyurl.com/bookvolunteer> is Friday, March 3.

Syracuse University’s event is part of a regional Human Library program supported by the Central NY Library Resources Council. Event partners have included the Library and Information Science Student Association at the School of Information Studies, the Office of Learning Communities and the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

The first Human Library program was held in 2000 in Copenhagen, Denmark. Since then, similar events have been organized in libraries, schools and other institutions around the world. For more information see <http://researchguides.library.syr.edu/humanlibrary>.

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