

One World, Many Stories

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<https://faulibrarydean.wordpress.com/2016/11/13/one-world-many-stories/>

On Tuesday, November 15, the FAU Libraries are hosting an event we are calling “The Human Library: One World, Many Stories.”



[Graphic design by Patricia Koppisch](#)

We have been planning this event for months to show our commitment to the principles of diversity and inclusion, of making sure that everyone knows that the FAU Libraries are a safe haven for people from all backgrounds, walks of life, points of view. We are joining the worldwide [Human Library](#) movement which bills itself as a “worldwide movement for social change” and which “is designed to build a positive framework for conversations that can challenge stereotypes and prejudices through dialogue. The Human Library is a place where real people are on loan to readers. A place where difficult questions are expected, appreciated and answered.” At our event on Tuesday, we will be featuring 13 Human Books – FAU students, faculty, and local community members – who will be available for conversation with anyone who is interested in learning more about them, their lives, their point of view. The event starts at 10:30 and continues until 12:30, with four twenty-minute rounds of conversation where people can move to another area and “check out” a different book.

The FAU Libraries’ Human Library event seems especially important now in light of what has been reported on across the United States. This past week (November 7-13), there have been numerous reports from across the country of people being verbally and sometimes physically harassed or attacked because they were female, Muslim, Hispanic, African-American, gay, or different in some way. The Internet and the news media are reporting on many incidents, such as CNN’s [Reports of racist graffiti, hate crimes post-election](#). As awful as this is, the reality is that there have been incidents like this across the country for a long time. A year ago, the New York Times ran a piece entitled [Racism on Campus: Stories From New York Times Readers](#). FAU’s commitment to diversity and inclusion is seen in its [Strategic Plan for the Race to Excellence, 2015-2025](#) where it has identified Diversity as one of its nine Platforms and where it is stated that FAU strives to “Become the national model for the diversity of the student body.” FAU’s [“Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs](#) promotes the academic and personal growth of traditionally underserved students. The office collaborates with the campus community to create an institutional and community climate of social justice. We promote access and equity in higher education and offer programs that educate the campus about diversity.”

Others in the country are also taking strong stands in support of diversity and inclusion. [The University of California System this past week issued a statement](#) that read, in part: “The University of California is proud of being a diverse and welcoming place for students, faculty, and staff with a wide range of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. Diversity is central to our mission. We remain absolutely committed to supporting all members of our community and adhering to UC’s Principles Against Intolerance. As the Principles make clear, the University “strives to foster an environment in which all are included” and “all are given an equal opportunity to learn and explore.” The University of California will continue to pursue and protect these principles now and in the future, and urges our students, faculty, staff, and all others associated with the University to do so as well.”

The FAU Libraries are making it clear that we stand on the side of diversity and inclusion. Our newly formed Diversity and Inclusion Committee is charged to make recommendations to the me as Dean of University Libraries on:

- defining the scope of diversity needs within the context of the University’s and the Libraries’ strategic plans and mission statements
- reviewing FAU Libraries services, collections, and technology to ensure full support for people of all backgrounds and perspectives
- the development of signature events, services, collections, and exhibits to promote diversity and inclusion
- improving the library’s work environment to ensure a safe, welcoming, supportive environment for all Libraries faculty and staff
- arranging staff development opportunities to increase awareness and appreciation of different backgrounds and perspectives reviewing recruitment and hiring practices within the Library to promote diversity and inclusion
- reviewing policies and procedures to remove obstacles and promote greater diversity and inclusion
- developing the Libraries as role models for diversity for the FAU community

The Human Library event on November 15 is just one manifestation of our commitment to being a safe haven for all of FAU’s students, faculty, and staff. Come to us for help. Come to us to discover and celebrate who you are. Come to us explore the world in safety.



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