

INVISIBLE STRUGGLES

Stories of Northern Segregation

News Release

Contact: Diane Steinert
330-677-4549

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Locally Produced Documentary About Racial Segregation in Warren to Air on PBS 45 & 49

Kent State University Trumbull Campus students' project leads to documentary, Warren town forum and more

Produced by



In conjunction with



PBS 45 & 49

1750 Campus
Center Drive
P. O. Box 5191
Kent, Ohio 44240-5191

Phone 330.677.4549
Fax 330.678.0688

questions@wneo.org
<http://www.pbs4549.org>

KENT, Ohio – Dec. 15, 2006 – Warren resident Cliff Johnson offers an interesting perspective about racial segregation during the 1950s and early 1960s. “I personally would rather have someone call me a bunch of dirty names and at least acknowledge me as a person than act as if I wasn’t even there.” For Johnson and many other blacks who lived in the northern United States, this more passive form of racism was a way of life during the Civil Rights Movement.

The experiences of Johnson and other Warren residents are present in a new documentary set to premiere on PBS 45 & 49. **Invisible Struggles: Stories of Northern Segregation** will premiere on Monday, Feb. 5 at 9 p.m., followed at 10 p.m. by the broadcast of a town hall forum about race relations. The program and forum coverage will air again on Tuesday, Feb. 6 at 12:30 a.m. and on Sunday, Feb. 11 at 2 p.m.

Invisible Struggles is directed by Kent State University faculty member Molly Merryman, Ph.D., assistant professor of justice studies. Assistant direction is provided by Ken Bindas, Ph.D., professor of history and Joe Murray, Ph.D., assistant professor of journalism and mass communications. The narrator for the documentary is Warren resident Paula Johnson, who took an early interest in the project and asked to attend the class, despite not being enrolled in college at the time.

-more-

Invisible Struggles – 2

In conjunction with the premiere, a town hall forum discussing issues of race relations past and present will be held on Thursday, Feb. 1 at 7 p.m. at the W.D. Packard Music Hall in Warren. Gene Shelton, a professor and academic diversity adviser in the KSU School of Journalism and Mass Communication, will moderate the forum, which will include a screening of the documentary; a question-and-answer session with the filmmakers, students and interviewees; and a panel discussion. The first hour of the forum will be broadcast on PBS 45 & 49 following the documentary airings.

Invisible Struggles evolved from a Kent State Trumbull special topics class, Civil Rights in America: 1954-1964, that Merryman and Bindas taught in the fall of 2002. Students in the class interviewed Warren-area black residents who were civil rights activists or who witnessed or experienced racial segregation. As the oral history project progressed, the professors became aware of the significance and importance of the findings. "The honesty of the subjects in sharing their stories made us realize that we could document this form of cultural segregation through oral history," Bindas said.

The **Invisible Struggles** project has grown to including a high school history essay contest to be held in February 2007, where local high school students will be invited to participate in the forum and submit reflective essays with the opportunity to win Kent State Trumbull scholarships. Also in February, Invisible Struggles producers will release a curriculum guide for northeast Ohio schools to use in conjunction with the documentary.

"Our overall goal with this project has been to educate," said Merryman, "so we wanted to connect the broadcast with education in area schools and to encourage ongoing education through scholarships. Kent State University President Lester Lefton is hosting a fund-raiser in conjunction with the town forum to raise moneys for minority students and studies."

For more information about **Invisible Struggles: Stories of Northern Segregation**, visit the program's Web site at www.invisiblestruggles.org.

About Kent State University's Trumbull Campus

Kent State University's Trumbull Campus, located just north of the Route 5 bypass on State Route 45 in Warren, OH, offers programs at the freshman and sophomore level in 170 majors, along with 18 certificates and 15 associate degree programs. Junior/senior level coursework is offered for baccalaureate degree completion in applied communication, business management, English, general studies, justice studies, nursing, psychology, and technology. The Workforce Development and Continuing Studies Center at Kent State Trumbull provides non-credit training to individuals and businesses covering more than 60 areas of study. Kent State Trumbull faculty and the Workforce Development instructors are positioned to provide the tools that will make you and your company more productive, competitive, and efficient within a constantly evolving global economy.

About PBS 45 & 49

PBS 45 & 49 is owned and operated by Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., a private, nonprofit corporation. A trusted community resource, PBS 45 & 49 uses the power of noncommercial television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire. For more information about PBS 45 & 49, visit www.pbs4549.org or call 1-800-854-4549.