

Upcoming Chicago Benefit Features Senator Barack Obama

A dynamic speaker, thoughtful students, and energetic chairs are creating great excitement as we approach Chicago's Fifteenth Annual Benefit Dinner on **May 5th at the Hilton Chicago Hotel**, co-chaired by Penny Pritzker and Bryan Traubert and Sandy and Jim Reynolds. The program will feature students from area schools in thoughtful conversation with Senator Barack Obama. Together they will explore some of the major moral questions that face our country today, including identity, race, class, and stereotyping. For more information contact Juli Miller at (312) 345-3232.

Film Sparks Lively Student Discussion

Last fall, acclaimed filmmakers **Marco Williams** and **Whitney Dow** discussed their documentary, "*I Sit Where I Want: The Legacy of Brown v. Board of Education*" at a *Community Conversation*, sponsored by The Allstate Foundation, at Evanston High School that drew nearly 500 community members, teachers, and students.

The film explores the legacies of the Brown vs. Board decision outlawing segregation in public schools, and follows a racially diverse group of high school students in New York as they attempted to integrate their self-segregated lunchroom. The film inspired audience members to take immediate action, particularly when one student attendee said, "You've seen the film. Now what are you going to do about it?" This challenge sparked students to jump up from their seats and introduce themselves to someone they didn't know. When things settled down, dozens of students lined up at the microphone to talk honestly and thoughtfully about how issues of race and ethnicity get played out in their schools.

**"You've seen the film.
Now what are you
going to do about it?"**

—Student attendee

"The movie helped me understand it [segregation] a little bit better. Segregation is fueled by fear and stereotypes. I love the idea of people of all races talking to someone of a different race," said 9th grader Jasmine P. from Young Women's Leadership Charter School.

Williams and Dow also met with 145 Facing History students from Maine West and Evanston Township High Schools earlier that day.

Save the Date for the next *Community Conversation* with James Fallows, *The Atlantic Monthly's* National Correspondent, on April 4th. For more information, please visit www.facinghistory.org/allstate.

Visit www.facinghistory.org for details about summer institutes, events, workshops, and more.

Facing History and Ourselves

Chicago matters

WINTER 2006

South Africa Activists Inspire Audiences

On January 12th, over 400 people attended a *Community Conversation* with South African Constitutional Court Justice **Albie Sachs**, a human rights activist world-recognized for his role in creating South Africa's new constitution and his life partner, **Vanessa September**, an urban architect. They discussed South Africa's emerging democracy following the fall of apartheid and shared their personal stories on the peaceful transformation of that region. Earlier that day, Sachs and September met with 60 students from Walter Payton High School and the ACT Charter School.

Community Conversations is a national speaker series offered by Facing History and The Allstate Foundation that examines issues of civic responsibility.



From left to right: Sam Dyson and Eileen Murphy from Walter Payton H.S., with Justice Albie Sachs and Vanessa September

Photo by Dan Rest

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Student Dialogue about Identity and Belonging

As part of a grant from the Polk Bros. Foundation, which sponsors Chicago's Race and Membership Institute, Facing History recently hosted a dialogue about S.E. Hinton's novel *The Outsiders* with 60 sixth grade students from Perspectives Charter School and Paul Revere Accelerated School. With guidance from Facing History, teachers Jody Koizumi and Ebonee Green used *The Outsiders* as the foundation to explore themes of identity and membership.

The energetic and exciting student conversations were a huge success, and plans are in progress for another meeting. "The students have not been able to stop talking about the day," said Green.

Teaching History in Rwanda

Since the 1994 Rwandan genocide there has been a moratorium on the teaching of history because the curriculum had once reinforced racist ideologies.

Facing History and Ourselves has been working in partnership with The

National University of Rwanda, the Rwandan Ministry of Education, and the University of California at Berkeley Human Rights Center to develop a new history curriculum. Facing History and Rwanda's National Curriculum Centre are currently training teachers in over 500 secondary schools in Facing History methodology as well as in the new curriculum.

Celebrating the Power of Words

During the Holocaust, courageous young writers bore witness to the horrors of the genocide and kept record of their own hopes, loss, and fears. In a Facing History workshop last October, 31 teachers explored some of these voices in Alexandra Zapruder's award-winning book, *Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust*, which comes to life in the MTV documentary, *I'm Still Here*. Facing History has written the study guide to accompany the book and film, which enriches the study of these valuable historical sources.

The resources and activities explored in the workshop demonstrated the power of words, exemplified by the moving story of artist and poet Ava

Kadishson Schieber. She spoke about her experiences as a child hiding in Belgrade during the Holocaust. To download the Salvaged Pages study guide, visit www.facinghistory.org/resources.

Innovative Model for Pre-Service Education

For the last six years, Facing History has been part of a unique partnership with Northwestern University to mentor undergraduate pre-service teachers in the education program. To date, eighteen interns in their sophomore year have worked closely with Facing History. They are first immersed in program materials, then accompany program associates as they work with teachers. Facing History works actively with Northwestern to pair interns with a Facing History teacher for the remainder of their degree program.

Most teachers do not get this kind of rich foundation before they start their careers. This is a unique model of pre-service education, providing new teachers the advantage of being familiar with Facing History content and methodologies before they arrive in the classroom.

Night, Oprah, and Facing History

Rachel Shankman, Director of Memphis' Facing History Office, has been selected as a judge for the national high school essay contest on *Night* by Elie Wiesel, Oprah's latest Book Club choice. To view Facing History's extensive resources on using *Night* in the classroom, please visit www.facinghistory.org/night.

FACING HISTORY BY THE NUMBERS

- Last year, Facing History offered more than 50 institutes and 130 workshops in locations worldwide and online, with over 3900 participants
- facinghistory.org receives a monthly average of 2.7 million hits representing 42,000 unique visitors



FACING HISTORY AND OURSELVES is an international educational and professional development organization whose mission is to engage students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and antisemitism in order to promote the development of a more humane and informed citizenry. By studying the historical development and lessons of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide, students make the essential connection between history and the moral choices they confront in their own lives.