Schedule of Events

What Stands Between Us (OPEN TO PUBLIC) 12:00-1:30 PM

Someone once said that westerners are very good at honoring diversity, but not very good at practicing it. If we are ever going to learn about someone who is different from ourselves, we are going to have to leave the comfort of our familiar world and begin a relationship, not just by talking about ourselves, but by truly wanting to make a connection through honesty, curiosity and our willingness to be open to new ideas and relationships. That kind of relationship will require sharing stories, listening with a desire to learn, being moved, and wanting to establish a friendship of mutual understanding and respect. The world is not a plane flight away. It has always been close at hand. We can never become a community until we have first learned about those who are next to us, our next door neighbors, and those we have been taught to be afraid of. What we are talking about is breaking down the walls we have created out of fear and truly desiring to confront what stands between us.

Diversity Conversations on Campus (FACULTY AND STAFF) 2:30-4:30 PM

So many times educators are afraid to begin a conversation on diversity issues because they have had a bad experience or feel they will say something wrong or hurtful. This seminar is one of our most exciting and satisfying ones, because it helps everyone practice talking to someone who is different from themselves in a compassionate and honest way. Participants will learn that they are not alone in their fears and though we all lack a “model” of how begin this type of conversation and will probably hurt or anger each other, the most important ingredient is our sincerity and our willingness to learn and understand each other.

We will practice sharing with each other through films, small group interactions, role plays, and personal stories. Participants will learn:

• Noticing the impact and intent of our communications
• Ways to respond compassionately and openly about diversity issues
• How to listen mindfully and with awareness
• Learning how personal stories can affect our perceptions and attitudes
• Discover ways to create a sense of community through dialogue and stories
• How to work with conflict and hurt when diversity issues are involved

If These Halls Could Talk - Documentary Film Showing and Diversity Dialogue (STUDENTS) 5:30-8:30 PM

In the summer of 2010, Lee Mun Wah brought together eleven college students from around the country to explore issues of race on their campuses. In the process of sharing their stories and different life experiences with each other, they discover and expose the complexity and anguish that accompany those experiences, while trying to be understood and validated in a predominantly white environment. Their stories are starkly emotional and the issues they provoke are equally perplexing, begging to be heard and confronted.

To learn more about Lee Mun Wah, below is a link to one of his TED talks. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hp5SNpCtiWk

This event is sponsored by Institute Community and Equity Office, Office of Multicultural Programs, MIT Libraries, T9BR, Sloan School of Management and LBGTT Services at MIT.