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THE HUMAN LIBRARY: REAL PEOPLE - REAL CONVERSATIONS

July 28, 2023- What if you had the chance to acquire knowledge and understanding of contemporary, real-life issues from those who live them? What if, through face-to-face dialogue, assumptions, stereotypes and prejudices could be challenged? The public is invited to do just that at the Goffstown Public Library on Sunday, August 13 from 1-3:30 pm when they will hold their fifth Human Library event. Visitors will have the unique opportunity to check out and converse with “open books” who have volunteered to share their personal stories and answer questions about their lives, experiences, and perspectives. By providing a safe, respectful environment in which to conduct these conversations, it is the hope of the Human Library organization that a culture of acceptance will be cultivated.

From a diverse catalog which includes a community member who experienced homelessness, a woman living with dyslexia, a police officer, and a young woman who served as a surrogate, guests or “readers” will be able to have one on one, 20-minute conversations with these and other human books. Each book has a compelling story waiting to be told. Each has encountered adversity, and each has been the subject of marginalization or discrimination because of their lifestyle, religion, differing abilities or gender identification. The Human Library puts these real faces, real names, and real stories to the adage, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” Past human books have included a drag queen, lesbian rabbi, formerly homeless veteran, and a blind social worker.

“We are very excited to be hosting our fifth Human Library and once again be part of this ever-growing global movement, with events being hosted around the world. Being a vehicle for the public to explore the humanity of different lifestyles or belief systems and choices is part of our job. To be able to do that through face-to-face interaction makes it all the more meaningful.” – Dianne Hathaway, Director, Goffstown Public Library. This year, our Human Library event is part of our One Goffstown series.

The Human Library was conceived in 2000 by a Danish youth organization called Stop the Violence in response to intolerance and resulting violence within their communities. The concept quickly gained a foothold and since then, Human Libraries have been held in over 70 countries around the world. The initiative arrived in the US in 2008 with pilot programs in Washington and California. For up-to-date information about the Human Library project’s activities around the globe, follow them on Facebook or check them out at www.humanlibrary.org.

For more information about the event scheduled at the Goffstown Library, please visit www.goffstownlibrary.com or email Dianne Hathaway at dianneh@goffstownlibrary.com.

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