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Mini-Tunnel of Oppression Promotes Awareness

May 23, 2014

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— For the second year in a row, Illinois Wesleyan will present the Tunnel of Oppression, an interactive multi-media display that explores issues such as discrimination, oppression and prejudice.

Coordinators of the Tunnel of Oppression hope to raise awareness of societal problems and encourage people to make positive changes in their community. The end of the tunnel, called the “Hall of Enlightenment,” shows viewers how they can help prevent the issues addressed in the display.

Various May Term courses have been involved in creating the tunnel through the contribution of educational displays. Sociology adjunct faculty member Loree Adams’ class, “Social Work in Action,” produced a project entitled “Misperceptions of the West Side of Bloomington Lead to Community Oppression.” The class researched statistics on how the West Side of Bloomington compares to the rest of the city and surveyed IWU students on their opinions of West Bloomington.

“After going as a class to the West Side many times, I would say that most of our perceptions of it have changed,” said Leeza Kennedy’16, psychology major. “This is a community that has such pride in where they live, and they’re doing things to improve their lives.”

Students from “Politics in Fiction,” taught by Associate Professor of Political Science Kathleen Montgomery, researched types of oppression related to political science concepts from selected novels.

“The novels we are reading make the subject of power imbalances and oppression unavoidable, so the link to the Tunnel of Oppression was an obvious one for the students who are participating,” said Montgomery.

The students’ research topics include the relationship between freedom in the world and female empowerment or oppression globally, attacks on women’s education, oppression of women and girls in sweatshops and the declining press freedom around the world.

The Mini-Tunnel of Oppression will be free and open to the public on Tuesday, May 27, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event will be displayed in the entry level of The Ames Library.

For additional information, contact the **May Term Office** at (309) 556-3760.

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