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ECU Announces 2015-16 Voyages of Discovery Lecture Series

GREENVILLE, N.C. (Aug. 18, 2015) — Dr. William M. Downs, dean of East Carolina University’s Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, is pleased to announce the 2015-16 season of the Voyages of Discovery Lecture Series. The series advances the spirit of exploration and discovery that is the hallmark of the liberal arts, featuring speakers of international renown and wide public interest since its inception in 2007.

“ECU’s College of Arts and Sciences is proud to host this speaker series, and we invite our students, faculty, staff, alumni and community friends to attend,” said Downs.

Dr. Jeffrey S. Johnson, who was appointed the lecture series’ new director this summer, said, “The Voyages lecture series affords us an opportunity for spotlighting the mission of Harriot College and the significant ways in which we assist ECU and serve the region by educating citizens as we create new knowledge.”

Leading figures from a variety of fields will visit ECU this season to address topics ranging from national security and near-death experiences, to historical memorials and Navajo code talkers during World War II.

“Whether encountering a person or topic for the first time, or delving into a familiar subject more deeply, the Voyages lectures are events that satisfy our wonder and curiosity,” said Johnson.

The series opens on Sept. 29, with the Premier Lecture featuring Peter Bergen, CNN’s national security analyst and director of the National Security Studies Program at the New American Foundation in Washington D.C. Bergen will discuss “Making Sense of a Troubled World.”

On Oct. 27, ECU will welcome Dr. Raymond Moody, emeritus professor of consciousness studies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, whose lecture last season was rescheduled due to adverse winter weather conditions. This fall, for the Religion and Culture Lecture, Moody will discuss “Life After Life: The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences.”

Two events will follow in spring 2016. The Brewster History Forum on Jan. 26, 2016, will break from tradition as Dr. Karin Zipf, ECU associate professor of history, interviews two guests on the topic of “What’s in a Name? Memorials and Historical Memory.” The featured guests include Dr. Derek Alderman, head of the Department of Geography at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, and former ECU geography professor; and Dr. Alfred Brophy, the Judge J. Parker Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of North Carolina School of Law.
Rounding out the series on March 23, 2016, the Thomas Harriot Lecture will feature Zonnie Gorman, with a lecture on the Navajo Code Talkers of World War II. A recognized historian, teacher and consultant for the movie “Windtalkers,” Gorman is the daughter of the late Dr. Carl Gorman, artist, teacher and one of the original Navajo Code Talkers who devised the initial code.

The Voyages of Discovery Lecture Series is made possible through contributions from Harriot College’s Dean’s Advancement Council, various university organizations, and many friends and supporters. To make a contribution to the series, contact Major Gifts Officer Jennifer Tripp at 252-737-4201 or trippj@ecu.edu. For more information about the series and its speakers, contact the director, Dr. Jeffrey S. Johnson at 252-328-6378, or via email at johnsonj@ecu.edu. Additional information is available on the series’ website at www.ecu.edu/voyages.

All lectures for the 2015-16 season are free and open to the public, and will begin at 7:30 p.m. The two fall lectures will be held in Wright Auditorium on the campus of ECU, while the two events in the spring will be held in ECU’s Hendrix Theatre in the Mendenhall Student Center. Individuals requesting accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should call 252-737-1016 (voice/TTY) at least 48 hours prior to the event.

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