

Fitchburg State University Today

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Comedian W. Kamau Bell to "end racism" on Feb. 26

Comedian W. Kamau Bell promises to end racism "in about an hour" when he performs as part of the Fitchburg State University [CenterStage](#) arts and culture series on Thursday, Feb. 26 at the Falcon Hub in Hammond Hall, 160 Pearl St. The talk is part of the university's [Community Read](#) of *The New Jim Crow*.



W. Kamau Bell

Just like skinny jeans, superhero movies and celebrity weight loss, racism continues to make a comeback. Bell is here to make (non)sense of all of it all. *The W. Kamau Bell Curve: Ending Racism in About an Hour* is a hilarious exploration of the current state of America's racism, combined with a little (unknown) history, a little Powerpoint and a whole bunch of Kamau. The Curve is a seamless mix of stand-up comedy, video and audio clips, personal stories and solo theatrical performance. One part manifesto, one part diatribe and several parts funny, this evening is sure to provide laughs and provoke thought. Be advised, the performance features mature comment.

Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$20 for seniors, Fitchburg State alumni and free for Fitchburg State students and can be purchased at the Weston Box Office, 333 North St., which is open Thursday and Friday from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. and can be reached at 978-665-3347. Tickets can also be ordered [online](#).

Legal scholar Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* challenges the notion that the election of Barack Obama signals a new era of colorblindness. Alexander argues instead that racial caste in America has not been ended, just redesigned. The book explores the concept that the U.S. criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control, relegating millions to a permanent second-class status.

Throughout the Community Read, Fitchburg State faculty and staff will join with experts and artists from this region and beyond to explore the issues raised in the book. The public is invited to add their voices to the conversation as the university seeks to create community through communication. The series

is sponsored by the Carl T. Witherell '32 fund.

Also in February, the university will screen the film *42* (2013) at 4 p.m. **Thursday, Feb. 19** at the [Fitchburg Public Library](#), part of the Third Thursday Film Series. *42* tells the story of Jackie Robinson, from his signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1945 to his historic 1947 rookie season in which he broke the color barrier in major league baseball. Fitchburg State faculty member Chola Chisunka will introduce the film and lead a discussion afterward. Admission is free.

Back on campus, the acclaimed film *Night Catches Us* (2010) will be screened at 3:30 p.m. **Wednesday, Feb. 25** at Ellis White Lecture Hall in Hammond Hall. Set in 1970s Philadelphia, the film tells the story of an ex-Black Panther who returns to his old neighborhood only to find himself drawn back into the rivalries and love affair he had left behind. Pizza will be served and admission is free.

Issues of crime, punishment and social justice are also being explored through the arts. The exhibit *Cell Block Visions* and the *Inside/Outside Envelope Project* is continuing in the Hammond Hall Art Gallery in Hammond Hall, 160 Pearl St., through **Wednesday, Feb. 18**. Presented by art educator Phyllis Kornfeld, *Cell Block Visions* is a lively collection of inmate artwork created behind bars from county jail to death row. This is a look at the alternative art world flourishing in today's American prisons. Inmates, having no previous training, turn to art for a sense of self-respect and a way to find peace. The *Inside/Outside Envelope Project* is a collection of works created by prison inmates and sent to loved ones. Inmates from around the country have donated their envelope art to benefit the Read Alliance, which serves at-risk kindergarten and first-graders by recruiting and training teens to provide one-to-one tutoring in reading. Kornfeld will discuss the projects and her career in prison art education on **Tuesday, Feb. 10** at 3:30 p.m. in the art gallery. Refreshments will be served.

A full listing of events, including film screenings and art installations running into the spring, can be found online at fitchburgstate.edu/communityread.

Learn about volunteer opportunities at Special Olympics

There will be an organizational meeting **Wednesday, Feb. 4** at 4 p.m. in Kent Recital Hall for those interested in volunteering at this spring's Special Olympics games at Elliot Field.

The university will host hundreds of athletes from across the region at the games on Friday, May 1. The Kappa Delta Pi education honor society is once again organizing the event.

For more information, contact [Audrey Bekeritis](#) at abekeri1@student.fitchburgstate.edu or visit the group's [Facebook page](#).

Alumnus to discuss the graduate's journey through the world of work on Feb. 10

Fitchburg State alumnus Scott Lehto '08 will present "Lessons Learned from One Graduate's Tour through the Working World" on **Tuesday, Feb. 10** at 3:30 p.m. in the Randall Science

Lecture Hall. Admission is free and the talk is sponsored by the Biology/Chemistry Club and the GeoClub.

Lehto studied biology and geosciences at Fitchburg State and now works as a GIS consultant for the Kenerson Group, a software and consulting company.

All students interested in GIS, environmental issues and geosciences are encouraged to attend.

Distinguished Speaker series welcomes Rick Lavoie in March

Celebrated educator, consultant and Fitchburg State University alumnus Richard Lavoie will present "Strategies that don't work with kids who struggle, and some that do" when he is featured at the university's [Distinguished Speaker Series](#) on **Wednesday, March 11**.

The Distinguished Speaker Series, now in its ninth year, draws hundreds of area educators annually for an inspiring and informative professional development opportunity. The program is designed for superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, curriculum directors, special education directors, teachers, parents, graduate students, higher education faculty, and other interested school administrators and educators. The event will run from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 11 on the Fitchburg State campus.



Rick Lavoie '72 will speak on
March 11

Lavoie, a 1972 graduate of Fitchburg State, serves as a consultant on learning disabilities to several agencies and organizations including Public Broadcasting Service, The New York Times, the National Center for Learning Disabilities, Girl Scouts of America, Child Magazine and WETA. He is a member of the Professional Advisor Board of the Learning Disabilities Association.

Lavoie has delivered his message to over 500,000 parents and professionals throughout North America. He has the distinction of having delivered keynote addresses for all three of the major special needs advocacy organizations in the United States: the Learning Disabilities Association, Council for Exceptional Children, and Children with Attention Deficit Disorder.

He has held administrative positions at residential programs for 30 years. These experiences at residential schools have provided Lavoie with a "living laboratory" in which he developed and refined his methods and philosophies related to the education of adolescents with special needs.

Lavoie's address will look at numerous techniques that are frequently and extensively used despite the fact that these strategies are ineffective (such as follow-along reading, time out, classroom competition and punishment). This presentation will demonstrate these strategies and explore the reasons why they simply do not work.

The second half of the presentation will outline 12 unique and field-tested techniques that can be used by parents and professionals to modify and improve children's behavior and performance.

"As caregivers, we must consistently evaluate the strategies that we use with our students," Lavoie said. "As FDR cautioned us, 'Do something. If it works, do more of it. If it doesn't work, do something else.'"

Educators who attend the Distinguished Speaker Series will:

- understand the ineffectiveness of common "time out" strategies and learn effective alternatives to this technique;
- learn effective alternative strategies to replace common but faulty language arts techniques;

- master 12 behavior management techniques that can monitor and modify children's behavior at home and in the classroom

The deadline to register is Tuesday, March 3, but registrations received by **Friday, Jan. 30** will be entered into a drawing for free admission.

The registration fee is \$150, which includes the presentation, luncheon and professional development points (PDPs). The program offers four PDPs for educators. Payment can be received by check, credit card or purchase order, and teams of three or more within the same school district will be charged \$125 per person and must register by purchase order.

For more information and to register, visit fitchburgstate.edu/gce/speaker.

Plays of Neil LaBute presented by theater students

Three stinging, incisive plays about how we look at ourselves and others will be performed this spring on the Fitchburg State campus. Acclaimed playwright Neil LaBute's *Fat Pig*, *The Shape of Things* and *Reasons to be Pretty* will be performed by students at the Wallace Theater for the Performing Arts in the McKay Complex, 67 Rindge Road, from Wednesday, Feb. 18 through Sunday, March 1. Admission is free.

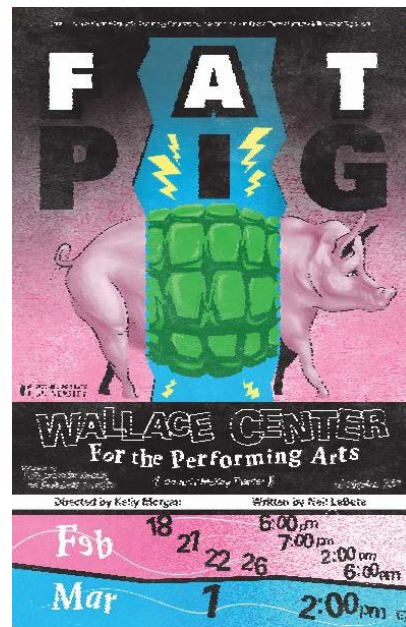
Fitchburg State faculty member Kelly Morgan (Communications Media), who coordinates Fitchburg State's professional theater track, calls LaBute's trilogy among the most important social issue plays he has produced at the university.

"I say this because these plays focus on self-image, self-confidence and how we alter how we look to please others by changing ourselves, and how we demean others based on how they look," Morgan said.

Morgan directs *Fat Pig*, which opens the repertory series on Wednesday, Feb. 18. "Cow." "Slob." "Pig." How many insults can you hear before you have to stand up and defend the woman you love? LaBute's award-winning, stingingly witty romance about love in the modern age of body image and peer pressure and a study in weakness that boldly questions our own ability to change what we dislike about ourselves. *Fat Pig* will be performed Wednesday, Feb. 18 at 6 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 21 at 7 p.m.; Sunday, Feb. 22 at 2 p.m.; Thursday, Feb. 26 at 6 p.m.; and Sunday, March 1 at 2 p.m.

Fitchburg State student Kelly Quinn directs *The Shape of Things*. LaBute's play looks at the nature of intimacy and psychopathy related to people's willingness to do anything to their bodies and the bodies of others. Set in a small university town in the American Midwest, the play looks at the lives of four young students who become emotionally involved with each other based on physical aesthetics. *The Shape of Things* will be performed Friday, Feb. 20 at 7 p.m.; Sunday, Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.; Wednesday, Feb. 25 at 6 p.m.; and Saturday, Feb. 28 at 2 p.m.

Fitchburg State student Noah Dawson directs *Reasons to be Pretty*. This play centers on four young, working-class friends and lovers who become increasingly dissatisfied with their dead-end lives, and each other. Following *Fat Pig* and *The Shape of Things*, it is the final installment of the playwright's trilogy focusing on the modern-day obsession with physical appearance. *Reasons to be Pretty* will be performed Thursday, Feb. 19 at 6 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 21 at 2 p.m.; Friday, Feb. 27 at 7 p.m.; and Saturday, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m.



The Fitchburg State University Speakers Series has resumed for the academic year. All the talks will be held from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in the Center for Teaching and Learning and refreshments will be served.

On **Monday, Feb. 23**, Kisha Tracy (English Studies) will discuss "Maternal Lament and Misremembering."

On **March 2**, Luis Rosero (Economics, History and Political Science) will discuss "Sustainability of the Decline in Inequality in Latin America: The Effects of Changing Trade Patterns."

On **April 6**, Rob Carr, Jon Krasner and Randy Howe (Communications Media) will discuss "Human-Technology Interactivity and Agency in Media Environments."

And on **May 4**, Susan Wadsworth (Humanities) will discuss "Rocks and Ruins: An Artist's Sabbatical in the Southwest."

MWPHE to host annual conference Friday, April 3

Massachusetts Women in Public Higher Education, Inc. ([MWPHE](#)) will host its annual conference on Friday, April 3 at the Chocksett Inn in Sterling. The organization's mission is to strengthen the status of women as professionals and to enhance the quality of public higher education.

The guest speaker for the event is Kathy Torpey Garganta, who will present "The Intentional Leader: Be a Better You."

Information on how to register for the event can be found [online](#).

Retired general and diplomat to deliver Conflict Studies Keynote on April 15

The challenges and opportunities in modern Russia will be the focus of Fitchburg State University's 2015 International and Conflict Studies Keynote Address in April. U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Peter Zwack (retired), formerly the U.S. defense attaché in the U.S. embassy in Moscow from 2012 to 2014, will deliver the address at 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 15 at the John Randall Lecture Hall in the university's science center, 333 Highland Ave. Admission is free with public parking in the Weston lots on North Street.

Gen. Zwack served in the U.S. Army for 34 years in command and staff tours across several continents, including warzones, in Russia, Afghanistan, South Korea, Serbia and Germany. He served as the senior U.S. defense official in Moscow from 2012 to 2014, and completed tours of duty in intelligence command positions in Afghanistan and Kosovo, Serbia. He has served and advised military commanders at the 4-star level, ambassadors, and cabinet-level government leaders.



Brig. Gen. Zwack

The talk will be introduced by Fitchburg State faculty member Joshua Spero, associate professor of international politics and coordinator of the International Studies Minor.

"We have a very important opportunity to host a very prominent member of our country's military and diplomatic corps, Gen. Zwack, who served recently as the senior U.S. defense official and Defense Attaché in Moscow during an especially challenging time historically between the U.S.

and Russia, and Russia and Europe," Spero said. "Our International and Conflict Studies Keynote Address by Gen. Zwack is a great open and free lecture for our community to experience."

The event is co-sponsored by the Department of Economics, History and Political Science, the Office of Academic Affairs, the International Studies Minor Program, the Center for Conflict Studies, the Career Services Office, the Office of International Education and the Political Science Club.

CenterStage at Fitchburg State University

The Fitchburg State University [CenterStage](#) cultural series is presenting a series of art exhibitions this spring at galleries across the campus.

In the Gallery at Sanders in the Sanders Administration Building, 300 Highland Ave., an exhibition of paintings and drawings by Maine artist Robert Sullivan is now on display through **Tuesday, March 31**. Admission is free. "Representation and Allusion: Paintings and Drawings by Robert Sullivan" features works by the artist using representational imagery as an exploratory tool. Through his work, he looks to open up vectors of meaning beyond the expected conventions of mere semblance. Sullivan is scheduled to give a talk in the gallery at 3:30 p.m. **Thursday, Feb. 5**. Refreshments will be served.



"Limitalus" by Robert Sullivan

At the Conlon Hall Media Wall in Conlon Hall, 316 Highland Ave., Communications Media Department faculty member and filmmaker Kevin McCarthy presents "Spin Cycle." The multi-panel installation captures the nighthawks of the spin cycle in this portrait of urban laundromats. McCarthy will discuss the work at a wall talk at 3:30 p.m. **Thursday, Feb. 12** at the media wall. Refreshments will be served.

Also, the art exhibit *Cell Block Visions* and the *Inside/Outside Envelope Project* will be held in the Hammond Hall Art Gallery in Hammond Hall, 160 Pearl St., through Wednesday, Feb. 18. Art educator Phyllis Kornfeld will discuss the projects and her career in prison art education on **Tuesday, Feb. 10** at 3:30 p.m. in the art gallery. Refreshments will be served. Kornfeld's project is part of the university's year-long [Community Read](#) of *The New Jim Crow*.


At the Conlon Hall Media Wall, photographer and Fitchburg State alumna Cate Brown's work will be displayed from **Thursday, Feb. 19** through **Wednesday, April 1**. Through her photography, Brown draws viewers into a world defined and surrounded by sandy beaches and salty ocean waters. Brown will present a wall talk at 3:30 p.m. **Wednesday, March 11** and refreshments will be served.



Alumna Cate Brown's work will be on display Feb. 19 through April 1.

Also opening in February, artist Frank Armstrong's exhibit "Often in a Different Landscape" will be featured from **Wednesday, Feb. 25** through **Wednesday, April 8**. In most cases, people think of landscapes as a sweeping view of mountains, lakes, rivers and meadows, but with a cultural overlay of human presence, they become social

landscapes. Armstrong proves landscape is not necessarily defined by its scope and size; it can be defined by its relevance to its usage. Armstrong will discuss his work in a gallery talk at 3:30 p.m. **Thursday, March 19.** Refreshments will be served.



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