NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Restorative Justice Expert and Civil Rights Attorney to speak at
Human Relations Commission Annual Dinner
Mayor’s Celebration of Diversity Awards Recipients Announced

(Evansville, IN) – The Evansville-Vanderburgh County Human Relations Commission will hold its Annual Dinner and Mayor’s Celebration of Diversity Awards on Wednesday, October 30, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at the Old National Events Plaza. The keynote speaker will be Fania Davis.

Fania Davis is a leading national voice on restorative justice, a quickly emerging field that invites a fundamental shift in the way we think about and do justice. She is a long-time social justice activist, civil rights trial attorney, restorative justice practitioner, writer, and scholar with a Ph.D. in Indigenous Knowledge. She has a law degree from University of California, Berkeley and practiced as a civil rights trial lawyer for 27 years. Coming of age in Birmingham, Alabama during the social ferment of the civil rights era, the murder of two close childhood friends in the 1963 Birmingham church bombing crystallized within Fania a passionate commitment to social transformation. Numerous honors include the Ella Baker/Septima Clark Award, the Bioneers Changemaker Award, the LaFarge Social Justice Award and the Ebony POWER 100 Award, among others. She is a Woodrow Wilson Fellow and the Los Angeles Times named her a New Civil Rights Leader of the 21st Century.

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Davis writes and speaks internationally on racial justice and restorative justice, which cuts across areas including interruption of the school-to-prison pipeline and mass incarceration, promoting community peace and healing, truth and reconciliation processes to transform harm against African-Americans and gender among other forms of restorative justice. She is the author of the recently published, The Little Book of Race and Restorative Justice: Black Lives, Healing and U.S. Social Transformation (April 2019).

The following are the 2019 Mayor’s Celebration of Diversity Awards recipients.

**Sadelle Berger Award**

- Estella Moss

**Willie Effie Thomas Development Award**

- Joshua Academy, Rev. Larry Rascoe (Founder)
- Que Pasa Midwest, WNIN, Paola Marizan and Mareea Thomas (Co-Hosts/Producers)

**Leadership Award**

- Rev. William Payne, Boss, Inc.

**Sue Woodson Community Relations Award**

- Officer Phil Smith

**Community Champion Award**

- Indiana Black Barbershop Health Initiative Barbershops (Evansville inaugural Barbershops)
  Lynch’s House of Coiffure; Going Forward Barber & Beauty Shop; Shark’s Den Barbershop;
  Fila’s Designs; and Jerald’s Barbershop
- Lift 4 Life

Ticket donations are $35 per person and the deadline to purchase is Friday, October 25. For additional information, please contact the Human Relations Commission at (812) 436-4927, hrc@evansville.in.gov or visit [2019 Human Relations Commission Annual Dinner](#).