

# The Alliance

## League of Women Voters, ACEH Want to Help Community "Stand Up: Protect the Vote"

*The Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony is dedicated to promoting unity, justice, equal opportunity, ethnic awareness, cross-cultural understanding, and*

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***Diversity, Unity, and Justice Are at the Heart of ACEH***

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On Monday, October 16, the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony (ACEH) will co-sponsor a public forum by the Holland Area League of Women Voters on protecting the rights of voters. The event--**Stand Up: Protect the Vote--will be at 6:30 pm at Herrick District Library, 300 S. River, Holland.** Other co-sponsors are LAUP, LEDA, and the Human Relations Commission.

**Joan Hunault, vice president for advocacy of the Michigan League of Women Voters,** will review the history of voting rights and voter suppression efforts and suggest ways to protect the vote.

"We are working statewide to prevent the disenfranchisement of eligible citizens," Hunault said. "We're very concerned about actions that impact communities of color, individuals with low incomes, and young people. Voter suppression laws have reduced the number of voters in many states, sometimes enough to change the outcome of elections." Leagues in 17 states are taking part in the voting rights project.

**CJ Grier, ACEH president,** said "The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy and to the protection of all other rights. Our aim should be to have as many citizens vote as possible. Anything that makes it more difficult or costly to vote is unjust. ACEH stands for diversity, justice, and inclusion and we want to see that reflected in all areas, including voting."

**Names of four audience members will be drawn at random to receive a book:** the three-volume graphic novel, "March," by Congressman John Lewis; "The King Years," by Taylor Branch; "The Fight to Vote," by Michael Waldman, or "Give Us the Ballot," by Ari Berman.

The nonpartisan League of Women Voters has worked to register voters for 98 years, since women gained the right to vote with passage of the 20<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1919.

In 2015 and 2016, ACEH partnered with TRIO/Upward Bound at Hope College to show the voting rights documentary, "Selma: Bridge to the Ballot," and to provide information on voting to eligible youth.



# A Proper Protest

By C. J. Kingdom Grier, president of ACEH

In August 2016, NFL star Colin Kaepernick decided to take a page out of the book of great humans before him: to protest injustice with his body. His decision to take a knee during the national anthem will go down in history alongside that of Harriet Tubman, who physically ushered slaves to freedom; of Mahatma Gandhi, who chose to starve himself until justice prevailed in his beloved India; and of Rosa Parks, who protested unjust practices in Montgomery by refusing to give up her seat on a segregated bus. For the sake of freedom and justice for all, civil rights leaders, both Black and White, marched across the Pettus bridge in Selma, subjecting their very bodies to the blows of those who opposed them.

Like those who went before him, Kaepernick's protest was met with great opposition, such that his career as a football professional came to a screeching halt. He became a laughing stock, indeed a fool to his peers who watched him kneel down on his career to stand against injustice.

On Friday, September 29, 2017, the Holland High School varsity cheerleaders decided to also take the path of resistance laid by freedom fighters before them. These courageous teenagers took a respectful knee as they faced the flag during the national anthem. In a community gathering the next week, these students spoke eloquently about their respect for those who fought for their freedom to both stand and kneel. Their kneeling was a clarion call to our "nice" community that all is not well in our city and country. Since taking a knee these young women have been met with harsh words and threats of violence from members of their own community.

**So America, Holland, please tell me: What is the proper way to protest injustice?** Is there a more humble, gracious way to express disapproval than to silently take a knee while facing the flag? Would slaves be free without protest? Would segregation have ended without sit-ins and peaceful demonstrations in the public square? What would be a better way for athletes to express their disdain for the miscarriage of liberty and justice for all?

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## As ACEH Starts its Fiscal Year, Please Consider Becoming a First-Time or Renewing Member



The dues-paying members of ACEH support programs, publications, outreach, advocacy, partnerships with local organizations, and community social events. We can't do any of those things without YOU! The fiscal year is Oct 1 – Sept 30.

A great big thank-you to the people who have renewed their membership recently: **David Blatt and David Moore, Tom Bos, Donna Brooks, Carol and Brian Carder, Dorothy Chamness, Linda Den Uyl, Dean and Mary DeRidder, Janice Fike, Bob and Fran Hamilton, Kay Hubbard and Dan Fisher, Norma Killilea, Kim, Mark and Nebiyat Ludwig, Jean McFadden, Carol McGeehan, Al and Peg Minert,**

**Karen Prins, Carla and Al VerSchure, Marie Singer, Lou and Mary Anne Wagenveld, Herb and Ann Weller, Bob and Joan Williams, and Karen and David Zwart.** Please consider joining these folks and the many other individuals and organizations committed to justice, appreciation for diversity, and making West Michigan a place where all are welcomed and respected. Dues are:

**Individual: \$20.00 one year; \$35.00 two years; Family: \$30.00 one year; \$50.00 two years.**

**Nonprofit: \$40.00 one year Business: \$75 one year**

In lieu of, or in addition to, paying dues, you may make a pledge of service to ACEH. Checks or service pledges should be made out to ACEH and sent to Treasurer Al Minert, c/o ACEH, at P. O. Box 3007, Holland, MI 49422-3007. To pay by credit card, please log onto our secure website at <http://www.harmonyalliance.org/join.html>, click on "Join Us" and use the Pay Pal system. You may also join at any ACEH event. If you are not sure if your membership is current, please contact database manager Herb Weller at [hpweller@comcast.net](mailto:hpweller@comcast.net) or 396-2201.

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## Immigrant, Refugee Rights Summit Set for October 21

Sign up today for the 2017 **West Side Immigrant and Refugee Rights Summit**, to be held **Saturday, October 21**, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at Hope College's Maas Auditorium and Martha Miller Center, Columbia Avenue at 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Streets in Holland.

Presented by Lighthouse Immigrant Advocates, the Michigan Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, and Hope College, the Summit will focus on the challenges faced by immigrants and refugees, available resources, and strategies for making West Michigan more welcoming and inclusive.

The keynote speaker is **Agshin Jafarov**, a minister ordained in Reformed Church of America. He works with refugees settled in southwest Michigan and helps them adjust to the local culture. He also works with churches that are interested in refugee advocacy and adoption by assisting them in communicating more effectively with their adopted refugees. Jafarov grew up in Azerbaijan, worked as a lawyer until he became a Christian, and moved to the United States to study ministry. He graduated from Western Theological Seminary and ministered to international students until he began to work with refugees.



Sara Yore-Van Oosterhout, Esq., executive director of Lighthouse Immigrant Advocates, said the Summit includes speakers and break-out sessions with workshops, panels, and presentations, including Immigration 101, 2017 Law and Politics Update, Immigrant Farmworkers, Law Enforcement, Domestic Abuse & Human Trafficking Awareness, Unpacking Power in the Refugee, and workshops on Welcoming Diversity & Inclusion (Classroom, Community Action, Interfaith, Workplace).

The cost is \$40 for adults and \$20 for students, including lunch. For more information, and to register, go to <http://lighthouseimmigrantadvocates.com/summit> (scroll to bottom of page).

Congratulations NICE GOING!  
GREAT! Way to Go!  
Yea! FELICITATIONS  
CHEERS Take A BEST  
BOW! WISHES!

### Disability Network/Lakeshore Presents Ability Award at October 24 Dinner

The Disability Network/Lakeshore organization will hold its annual Ability Award dinner on Tuesday, October 24, beginning at 5:30 pm at Midtown Center, 96 West 15th St, Holland. The keynote speaker will be Randy Lewis, author of "No Greatness without Goodness" and founder of NOG-WOG, an organization that advocates for disability employment. He retired in 2013 as Walgreen's senior vice-president for logistics.

The Ability Award "honors those who persist in the vision of communities where people with disabilities can participate, contribute, and belong."

People interested in attending the free event must register by **October 15** at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2017-ability-award-tickets-36718532118>

### LAUP to Hold 2nd Annual Gala November 3

Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP) will honor Hope College and local businessman Tony Castillo of Milagro Six for their "outstanding contributions and support of LAUP over many years," and also highlight the organization's work in the past year and its vision for the coming year. The black tie event will feature fine food, drink, networking, and the musical group 5 En Clave. Cost is \$75 per person; \$500 for a table of eight. The gala will get under way at 6:30 pm at Laketown Golf & Conference Center, 6069 Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck. For information or to sign up, go to [www.laup.org/events](http://www.laup.org/events)

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FACEBOOK:

Look under Groups:  
ACEH – Alliance for Cultural  
and Ethnic Harmony

*Bringing People  
Together from Worlds Apart*



***ACEH to Host Big Read Discussion Nov. 10***

“When the Emperor Was Divine” has been chosen as the greater Holland area’s Big Read for 2017. **ACEH will host one of the community discussion events on Friday, November 10, at 7 pm at the Holland Museum, 37 West 10<sup>th</sup> St, Holland.** Librarian Abbey Stroop of Herrick District Library will be the discussion facilitator.

The first novel by Julie Otsuka, “When the Emperor was Divine” tells the story—from five points of view--of a California Japanese-American family uprooted from their home and sent to an internment camp in the Utah desert during World War II.

While supplies last, State Rep. Daniela Garcia will distribute free copies of the book on Oct. 28 at Herrick District Library, 300 S. River in Holland. Copies may be purchased at a 20 percent discount at Readers World in downtown Holland.

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