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Holly Kickliter

Raymond Arsenault

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BEHIND THE BROWN DECISION: A CONVERSATION WITH JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN

By: [Holly Kickliter](#) | Source: Raymond Arsenault, PhD, 727-553-4872
February 12, 2004 12:00AM EST

This lecture is the first in a series of community conversations about the impact of Brown v. Board of Education fifty years after the ruling. "St. Petersburg Remembers Brown v. Board of Education" events will explore the character and legacy of this landmark decision.

USF St. Petersburg history professor Raymond Arsenault and distinguished scholar John Hope Franklin will kick off a series of community conversations examining various aspects of the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision.

The lecture is free and open to the public. It will be held Wednesday, Feb. 18, at 7 p.m., at St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church, 1301 37 Street South, in St. Petersburg.

"This ruling revolutionized the entire philosophy of education across our country," said Vivian Fueyo, Ph.D., Dean of the USF St. Petersburg College of Education. "These community conversations are a forum for our university and community to talk about what school desegregation meant for St. Petersburg families and students, both in terms of social justice and the educational opportunities it created."

John Hope Franklin has instructed thousands of students in his 60-year teaching career. He is the John M. Manly Distinguished Professor of History Emeritus at Chicago University and the James B. Duke Professor of History Emeritus at Duke University. In the early 1950s, Franklin helped NAACP attorneys prepare for the Brown v. Board of Education school desegregation suit. More recently, he served as the chairperson of President Clinton's National Initiative on Race. In addition to serving as historical consultant on Steven Spielberg's Amistad, Franklin is the subject of First Person Singular: John Hope Franklin, a PBS chronicle of his life. In 1999, the PBS documentary, Race and reconciliation: A Journey Towards Peace, featured Franklin and Desmond Tutu.

Arsenault directs the University Honors Program, co-directs the Florida Studies Program, the only such program in the state, and serves as the John Hope Franklin Professor of Southern History at USF St. Petersburg. A noted civil rights historian, he is the author of the forthcoming book, Freedom Riders. He said, "This is an opportunity to hear from a renowned and legendary figure who participated in the landmark effort to bring an end to Jim Crow in the 1950s. John Hope Franklin is an icon of twentieth century African-American intellectual life and a renowned scholar of African-American history."

USF St. Petersburg and its community partners-the City of St. Petersburg, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, The Links and the St. Petersburg Bar Association-are the co-sponsors of St. Petersburg Remembers Brown v. Board of Education. Related community and campus events will take place in St. Petersburg between February and May.

Media Contact: Holly Kickliter, 727-553-4455
Story Source: Raymond Arsenault, PhD, 727-553-4872

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USF St. Petersburg - 140 Seventh Avenue South, St. Petersburg Florida 33701-5016 -- 727-553-4USF
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