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Our Racial Moment of Truth: Pulitzer Prize Winner Isabel Wilkerson to Visit RWU on Dec. 3

Public invited to President’s Distinguished Speakers Series event featuring renowned author and journalist, one of the leading voices on race and equality in America

BRISTOL, R.I. – With the high-profile killings of unarmed African-Americans at the hands of police and civilians, protests are mounting and debates intensifying. These events have left many people asking just how far the nation has really come since the days of Jim Crow – and the need for dialogue has never been more acute.

On Thursday, Dec. 3, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and bestselling author Isabel Wilkerson – a leading voice in the national conversation about race and equality – will address these issues and more as part of the President’s Distinguished Speakers Series at Roger Williams University. Members of the campus community and the public are invited to spend an evening with Wilkerson for a presentation titled “Our Racial Moment of Truth,” in which she will examine the persistence of racial injustice as a national challenge and how history can inform our work to resolve it.

Wilkerson was the longtime Chicago Bureau chief for the New York Times. During her tenure at the Times she became the first black woman in the history of American journalism to win a Pulitzer Prize and the first African-American to win for individual reporting.
In 2010, following 15 years of research and thousands of interviews, Wilkerson published *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration*. The book – which chronicles the decades-long migration of 6 million black citizens forced from the American South in search of a better life in northern and western cities, a movement that reshaped culture and politics across the country for generations to come – became a *New York Times* bestseller and won the 2010 National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction.

Wilkerson’s visit to Roger Williams marks one of the final events in a yearlong series at RWU titled *150 Years Later: The 13th Amendment & Race in America*, which has both celebrated the monumental legislation to abolish slavery, but also asked community members to reflect critically on the current state of race relations in the U.S.

The Dec. 3 presentation will take place in the Campus Recreation Center on the University’s Bristol campus at One Old Ferry Road. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the event will begin at 7 p.m. A book signing with the author will immediately follow the presentation. The event is free and open to the public; no tickets are required. For more information, call (401) 254-3166.

Launched in 2011, the President’s Distinguished Speakers Series at Roger Williams University invites thought leaders from a wide range of disciplines to share perspectives, inspire conversations and enrich the intellectual lives of students, faculty and staff at Roger Williams as well as members of the local community.

As part of the series, each guest is invited to devote much of the daylong visit to direct engagement with students in classroom sessions, offering RWU students unique opportunities for one-on-one interactions with some of the world’s leading authors, scholars, artists and public servants.