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NEWS RELEASE

Sept. 4, 2009

Contact: Dianna Riley, reunion organizer, 406-543-4855, DR59801@msn.com.

BLACK STUDIES REUNION EVENTS AT UM OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

MISSOULA —

The University of Montana will hold reunion events Sept. 17-19 that will include as many as 50 alumni from more than 14 states who were students in the University's Black Studies and African-American Studies programs.

Created in 1968, UM's Black Studies Program was one of the first in the nation. It grew to become the University's thriving African-American Studies Program.

Reunion participants also will include current and past program faculty and staff members, UM administrators and former student host families.

"Count me in!" is the common reply that Dianna Riley, reunion organizer, has heard from those who have contacted her about the events. Riley said she is excited about the enthusiasm from those who plan to attend.

The following reunion events are free and open to the public. They will take place in Gallagher Business Building Room 123.

10:30-noon Friday, Sept. 18:

- Welcome by UM President George Dennison.
- Keynote address by Ulysses Doss, founder of UM's Black Studies Program. Before coming to UM, Doss was active in the civil rights movement. He worked with Martin Luther King Jr. during the campaign for the integration of residential neighborhoods in the Chicago area. King was assassinated the same year Doss was hired to teach humanities at UM. Doss taught at the University for 25 years. He retired in 1993.

- Comments by Esther Thamani Akbar, first president of the Black Student Union at UM.

1-3 p.m. Friday, Sept. 18:

- Presentation about the 1974 re-enactment of the 1897 25th Infantry Bicycle Corps Expedition from Missoula to St. Louis. Presented by UM alumnus and former University lecturer Pfferron Doss of Portland, Ore.; UM alumnus Dave Watson, of Rochester, N.Y.; and former Black Studies Program Director Richard Smith of Pamona, Calif. The three were instrumental in organizing the 1974 re-enactment.

Reunion hosts are Dennison, University Executive Vice President Jim Foley, Provost Royce Engstrom, Vice President for Student Affairs Teresa Branch, Intercollegiate Athletics Director Jim O'Day, and former host families Gary and Carol Graham and Larry and Dianna Riley.

Support for the reunion also came from Bob and Judi Pantzer, Dave and Marlene Pantzer, and Dick and Julie (Pantzer) Rossignol – the family of Robert T. Pantzer, UM president from 1966 to 1974.

Information about all reunion events is on the UM Alumni Relations Web site at <http://www.grizalum.org> (click on "Events"). For more information, call Riley at 406-543-4855 or e-mail DR59801@msn.com.

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