2019 SYMPOSIUM FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE
ACHIEVING JUSTICE THROUGH ACTION

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5TH
2PM- 4PM
EXECUTIVE EVENT SPACE
(REAUD ADMIN. BLDG.)
LAMAR UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

THE SYMPOSIUM FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE FEATURES DIVERSE SPEAKERS ADDRESSING A MEANS FOR JUSTICE THROUGH ACTIONS PROMOTING DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS. EACH PRESENTER ADDRESSES A DISTINCT DIMENSION & POTENTIAL FOR PROGRESS THROUGH DEMOCRATIC EMPOWERMENT AND CIVIL CONSIDERATIONS. IN A SOCIETY OF LAWS DEMOCRACY REMAINS BOTH THE FOUNTAIN OF HOPE ILLUMINATING THE PATH OF CHANGE AND THE SWORD THAT DEMANDS JUSTICE. THUS EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE.
What is Social Justice?

Frequently the subject of social justice is addressed through narratives calling attention to an injustice. Social justice is not achieved through a singular event or solution. Thus the attainment of social justice cannot be similarly reduced to singular suppositions and goals. Active solutions such as those advocated by panel participants materialize the potential towards affecting change towards justice along multiple fronts. Political activity and participation are critical to the marginalized as an active means for change. These are but a few examples of action towards social justice.

Distinguished Presenters

“The Disparity between Latino Demography and Social Justice”

**Rogelio Sáenz** is a sociologist and demographer at the University of Texas at San Antonio, where he is Professor in the Department of Demography. He served as Dean of the College of Public Policy at UTSA from 2011 to 2019. Dr. Sáenz has written extensively in the areas of demography, Latina/os, race and ethnicity, inequality, immigration, public policy, and social justice. He is co-author of *Latinos in the United States: Diversity and Change* and co-editor of *International Handbook of the Demography of Race and Ethnicity*. Dr. Sáenz recently received the Cesar Estrada Chavez Award from the American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity (2018), and was named as one of the Top Latino Leaders in 2018 by the National Diversity Council for Latino Workplace Equity.

“Population Dynamics and Human Rights: Integrating Comprehensive Healthcare with Environmental Sustainability”

**Hannah Evans** works with students, professors, and activists to promote positive social and environmental change. Through an examination of some of the root causes of population growth, her work seeks to highlight the interconnections between poverty, marginalization, women’s rights, and environmental pressures made worse by climate change.
“Promoting Gender and Political Equality for Minority Populations”

Leticia Nevárez Zavala, is an activist and United Nations consultant for gender policy advocating for political equity amongst marginalized populations. She is a graduate from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in sociology with both bachelors and master’s degree. Currently she is a Ph.D. student at the University of Texas at Austin Sociology program and a lecturer at both the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley at Edinburg and South Texas Community College in McAllen Texas.

“When Industry is Your Neighbor: An examination of the environmental movement and TCEQ air monitors in Beaumont, Texas.”

Stuart A. Wright is Professor of Sociology and Chair of the Department of Sociology, Social Work and Criminal Justice at Lamar. He is a former NIMH Research Fellow (Yale), Rockefeller Foundation Scholar (Bellagio, Italy), and Visiting Fellow at the Center for Advanced Studies, Norwegian Academy of Science & Letters in Oslo, Norway. He has authored over fifty publications in scholarly books and journals, including six books. Dr. Wright is known internationally for his research on religious and political movements, conflict and violence.

Margot Gage Witvliet is a social epidemiologist and Assistant Professor at Lamar University. She is a veteran advocate and is the director of Young Americans Overseas, an organization working to build Texas’s first Women Veteran and Women First Responder Park. Dr. Witvliet has been a visiting researcher at UCLA and Harvard University. She has written over 17 peer-reviewed journal publications and has over 100 citations. Her co-authored publication on corruption and health is cited by the United Nations. Dr. Witvliet was nominated in 2019 for the Lamar Inspirational Woman Award. She speaks Dutch fluently and has lived in Portugal, Norway and the Netherlands. Dr. Witvliet teaches courses on research methods, epidemiology and global health, global health disparity, environmental health sociology and medical cannabis.
“Positivity and the Power to Change your Environment: Transforming Prison Re-Entry.”

Damon West works for the Provost Umphrey Law Firm in Beaumont, TX. When not out speaking to students and athletes about the dangers of drugs and the consequences of bad decisions, he spends his free time volunteering, doing service work, attending 12 Step Recovery groups, exercising and enjoying his new life with his family and faith community at St. Elizabeth’s Church. His message is both a cautionary tale and one of hope and perseverance in the face of the most extreme odds.

For more information and questions contact Dr. Jesse Garcia at jgarcia40@lamar.edu 409-880-8548.