



## Professionals of Color Lecture Series 2011- 2012

### **Diane Nash**

#### **1961, The Freedom Riders & Our Struggle for Racial Justice**

Tuesday, February 28, 2012 noon - 1p.m.

Kirkhof Center, Room 2204, Allendale Campus

LIB 100 & US 201 Approved

A Chicago native who had never experienced segregation in public accommodation before moving to the South, Diane Nash went on to become one of the pioneers of the Civil Rights Movement.

Nash's involvement in the non-violent movement began in 1959 while she was a student at Fisk University. In 1960, she became the chairperson of the students sit-in movement in Nashville, Tennessee, the first southern city to desegregate its lunch counters. Nash was one of the founding students of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee.



In 1961 she coordinated the Freedom Ride from Birmingham, Alabama, to Jackson, Mississippi, a story which was documented in the recent PBS American Experience film *Freedom Riders*.

Her many arrests for her civil rights activities culminated in Nash being imprisoned for 30 days in 1961, while she was pregnant with her first child. Undeterred, she went on to join a national committee to which she was appointed by President John F. Kennedy that promoted passages of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Diane Nash is the recipient of numerous awards, including the War Resisters' League Peace Award; the Distinguished American Award presented by the John F. Kennedy Library; the LBJ Award for Leadership in Civil Rights from the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum; and an honorary doctorate of human letters from Fisk University, her alma mater. Most recently, Nash delivered the 2009 Slavery Remembrance Day Memorial Lecture in Liverpool, England.

Her work has been cited in numerous books, documentaries, magazines and newspaper articles and she has appeared on such TV shows and films as *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Spike Lee's Four Little Girls*, and *PBS's Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years 1954 – 1965*.

Events are free and open to the public. For information on parking or for individuals requiring special accommodations, please contact the Office of Multicultural Affairs at (616)331-2177 or email us at: [oma@gvsu.edu](mailto:oma@gvsu.edu)

